A Briefe discourse of certaine pointes of the religion, which is among the commõ sort of Christians, which may bee termed the Countrie Diuinitie.

With a manifest confutation of the same, after the order of a Dialogue.

Compiled by George Gifforde.

Imprinted at London for Toby Cook, dwellinge at the Tigers head in Paules churchyard & are there to besolde.

1583.

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To the Right honourable *his very good Lord, Ambrose* Earle of warwick, Maister of her Maiesties Ordinance, *Knight of the noble order of* the Garter, and one of her highnesse *most honorable priuie Counsel, George* Gifford wisheth increase of al true happines & honour, with the continuell comfort of a good *Conscience.*

NOthing doubt (right honourable) but that it will seeme great rashnes vnto some, and no smal folly, to offer and present so simple and slender a booke as this is, vnto your Lordship: for what doth it seeme to bring with it worthie the person of a Noble man? There is no pompe in the manner of speech, for it is rude and country like: the matter it selfe is not handled as a disputation betweene deepe diuines, but after the manner of plough men and carters

tars: a great absurditie therefore appeared in this, that an honourable person of great dignitie should be called for, as it were to stand by and heare such speak. Good cause therefore, that I should render some reason of this my boldnes, which I will willingly doo, to vse that which the heathen Poet saith:

Si canimus syluas, syluæ sint consule dignæ.

VVil not suffice: for although respecting the things which I handle, because they belong to the trees that are planted in the Lordes Orchard, they doo as far excell the woods & groues, as the vine doth the bramble bush, yet neuertheles he hath so richly decked his base & beggerlye matter, hee hath so clothed it in silkes from top to toe, and hath hanged so many iewels vpon it, that it shal find entertainement, and bee thought meete for the courts of princes, whereas mine being very poore clad, wil be reiected. I wil expresse (therefore) a better reason of my doing, which is this. As those which haue corne fieldes, think it not a

thing

thing vnwritten to be told by the inferiour
bishoppes &c. wee feele, which would bring
dew &c. that the strength of their principle not
to haue them plucked vp: but I know
that it is not a vaine worthy thing to shew
vnto thine, which are of high callinge,
the hurtfull & daungerous weedes which
would ouergrow and choke the heauē
ly seede of the gospel, sowen in the Lords
field. which as our church therfore is
common wealth, being the Lords hus-
bandry, is ouergrowne with weedes &
almost laid waste. I see no cause where-
fore I may iustly be blamed, for giuing
notice therof in so plain wise vnto your ho-
nour. Seeing their principall causes and
fountaines frō whēce corruptiōs flow,
are to be taken away and dryed vp by
those who God hath placed in the high-
est roomes. Among which the want of
a sincere ministerie of the worde is the
greatest, through absence of which, ther
is a flood of ignorance and darknes, o-
uerflowing the most part of the lāde: the
feare of God is banished from the grea-

sinne: the wonderfull heapes and piles of sinne, which should bee walked and cleansed away by the word, do vnsoundedly with one voice cry aloud in the eares of the Lord, for vengeance vpon the whole realme. The papistes cannot be converted, but hardened & turned out of the way, there is so foule disorder, and so many stumbling blockes cast in the way. The Diuell hath elbow roome to spread abroad, to plant & water all kinde of errours, so few there bee to withstand him. But to come to that particuler which I haste in this treatise: there are the most in number, who having Popetie taken from them and not taught throughly and sufficiently in the Gospel, doe stand as men indifferent, so that they may quietly inioy the world, they care not what religion come: they are like naked men fitte and ready for any coate almost that may bee put vpon them. The life of these is exceeding prophane they haue hardened themselues in their sinnes, by reason whereof they ga-

thus partly out of their owne braines, & partly out of some fayings in the worde, by which they cloke & defend their owne corrupt waies. I have therefore gathered the most common principles of their faith and religion, by which they assure themselues against true repentance and right vnderstanding. I haue not noted all, neither haue I medled with those seuerall grosse absurdities, wherin euery one hath prouided for himself after that sorte he is inuited. I craue your Lordships gentle construction, & taking in good worth this simple trauaile, pitying the sore of the poore church of christ, which is so full of grieuous sicknesses and sores, that vnlesse she be releeued and cured, she will neuer be able to continue life. She cannot thus most humbly craue his duty, as the hands of those which are neere about him do: Nurse. From whom she hath now long time receiued wonderfull protection and defence against aduersaries, that they make knowne her state, and labour the recouery

very ill learning of her health. Because it doth stand not only with their eternall glorie in the worlde to come, but also with their honourable estation in this life. Which cannot be established to florish in continuance, vnlesse the Lorde God haue in the prince to creepe in the midest of her that she may florish. For where he is dishonored and displaced of those whom he hath nourished in his bosome, her case is dangerous, for it is against all wise policie to make him an inheritour, who hath power of himself is able to root out and destroy a mightie kingdome: so that if she keep in fauour the league with him, there is no feare of any other.

This Lord of Lordes, and most mighty king, increase abundantly in you all heauenly & spirituall graces, with increase of honour in this world, to his glorie & your eternall comfort. Amen.

Your honours most humble to command. George Gifford.

¶ *A breefe discourse of certaine pointes of the religion, whiche is among the common sort of Christians: which may be termed the Coũtrie diuinitie: with a plaine and manifest confutation of the same, after the order of a Dialogue.*

Zelotes. Atheos.

Zelotes. WEll ouer taken my friend.

Atheos. I thanke you boyd.

Zelotes. How farre doo yee trauell this waye?

Ath. Twentie miles.

Zelot. Doo you dwell in Eſſex.

Ath. Yea, not farre from Cleluedon.

Zelot. What call yee the Towne where yee dwell?

Ath. B.

Zelot. Haue yee a preacher there?

Ath.

Ath. Wee haue an honest man our Curat.

Zelot. Doth he teach his flock?

Ath. Yee both his good will, and more ye cannot require of a man.

Zelot. Yee did commend him euen now to be an honest man.

Ath. Commende hym? yea I maye commende hym: I am perswaded wee haue the beste Priest in this countreye, wee wouide bee lothe too forgoe hym for the learnedest of them all.

Zelot. I pray yee let mee heare what his vertues be, for whiche yee doo commende him so highly.

Ath. Hee is as gentle a person as euer I see: a verye good fellowe, hee will not sticke when good Fellowes and honest men meete together too spende his groate at the Alehouse: I cannot tel, they preache and preach, but hee doeth liue as well as the best of them all. I am afrayde when hee is gone wee shal neuer haue the like againe.

Zelot. Bee these the great vertues whiche yee doe so commende hym for,

for, hee maye haue all these, and yet bee more meete for to keepe swine, then to be a Sheephearde ouer the flocke of Christe, is he able to teache the people, and doth he instruct them in Gods word?

Ath. I knowe not what teaching ye woulde haue, hée doeth read the seruice, as well as anye of them all, and I thinke there is as good edifying in those prayers and Homilyes, as in any that the Preacher canne make: let vs learne those first.

Zelot. That is not all whiche is required in a Minister, for a boye of tenne yeeres olde canne doe all this: doth hee not teache them to knowe the will of GOD and reproue naughtinesse amonge the people?

Ath. Yes that hée doeth, for if there bée anye that doeth not agrée, hée wyll seeke for to make them friendes: for hée will gette them to playe a game or two at Bowles or Cardes, and to drinke together at the Alehouse: I thinke it a goodlye way to make Charitie: hée is none of these busie Controllers: for

if he were, he could not be so well liked of some (and those not of the meanest) as he is.

Zelot. Doe yee call the Preachers of Gods woorde busie Controulers? doe they goe further then Gods woorde doeth leade them?

Ath. Wée maye call them busie controllers. I thinke we shal do nothing shortly, as poore a man as I am. I would not for fortie shillinges that wée had one of them, there be more of my minde.

Zelot. Some poore men perhaps.

Ath. Naye, the best in the parish, who would not so well like of our Curate, if he should meddle that way.

Zelot. I perceiue now what manner of man your Curate is, and I see like maister, like scholler.

Ath. Call you me so? I pray you.

Zelot. Why sir, I smell how valiantly he is, and also how ignorant you are. Let me questio you a little with you concerning that which you haue vttered.

Ath. I trust I haue vttered nothing but that might well beseeme an honest man.

Zelot. Nay

zelot. Nay all your speech doth bewray that you are a carnall man, for you haue made a very fine description of a good Curate, what meane you when ye say he is a good fellow, and will not sticke to spende his money amonge good fellowes, is it not because he is a pot companion.

Ach. Doe ye mislike good fellowship, is it not lawfull for honest men to drinke and be merry together?

zelot. I doe not mislike true friendship, which is in the Lord, ioyned in true godlynesse, but I mislike this vice, which ouerfloweth euerye where, that Drunkardes meete together, and fall quaffynge, and the minister whiche shoulde reproue them, maketh part of the chiefe when he should be at his studie, or be vppon the Alehouse bench at Cardes or dice.

Ach. I perceiue you are one of those curious and precise fellowes, which will allow no recreation, what would ye haue men doe? we shal doe nothing shortly? you would haue them sit moping alwayes at their bookes, I like not that.

zelot. Nay my friende, I doe not allowe that recreation, whiche prophane

men call so, which is no recreation, but a torment to a godly mind, to see men drunken, to heare them sweare and cayle, to spende their goodes and their time so lewdlye, and he that shoulde teache them, to bee a Ringleader: as there be manye, as it seemeth, whiche are entred into the ministerie, for none other purpose, but to liue an idle lyfe, to haue leasure to play at Cardes, or Tables, and Bowles all the Weeke. And therefore they haue no skill to teache, but like vnsauerie salte, are not good eyen for the dunghill.

Ach. These thinges were vsed before you were borne, and will be when you are gone, so long as men thinke no hurt when they play and be merry.

Nich. I perceiue you are of the righe stampe; yee me light vppon an argument, whiche may well be tearmed olde Suerse bee, because he bringeth a reason whiche doeth sticke by manye, when all other reasons forsake them. But let vs pull this olde fellowe out of his newe coate, and yee shall see what a leane shrimpe hee is, and so feeble, that he cannot go on stiltes: these these thinges were vsed say you, before you were borne, so were all other naughtie vices, are they now

good

good because they be olde? Because men committed them before I was borne, and will doe when I am dead.

Ash. I meane not so, but there were as wise men, and wiser then bee now among our Forefathers: and they would not haue vsed nor allowed such things, if they had not béene good: they knewe well enough what they did. Let not vs bée more precise then they were.

Zelot. I perceiue you ground your faith and your doings vpon men, & not vpon Gods word.

Ash. I pray GOD I may follow our Forefathers, and doe no worse then they did: what should wée seeke for to bee wiser or better then they: I would wée could doe but as well as they did.

zelot. Doe you not thinke that there were amonge our Forefathers, theeues, murtherers, adulterers, drunkardes, and such like?

Ash. I thinke there haue béene alwayes euill doers: & wilbe while ỳ worlds end.

zelot. Woulde yee haue vs to followe those, and to take their vices?

Ath. We are not to followe any thing but that which is good: and those whiche were godly and wise.

zelot. Is there any thing good, but that whiche GOD setteth downe in his worde? and were any wise and Godlye, but such as did followe the wyll of GOD expressed in his worde?

Ath. There is nothinge good but of GOD, and such as doo as he commaundeth.

zelot. Then you see olde sureshebee laid flat vppon the grounde, and your lustye champion is manifested to bee but skinne and bones, and the same draffe rotten: for nowe by your owne confession doeth followe that the worde of God is the only rule, and wee must followe our Forefathers no further then they follow the word of God. You must not follow Dauid nor Abraham in euery thinge they did. Furthermore, also these naughtie vises and corrupt customes came from the wicked forefathers, & not from the godly, whiche followed gods word.

Ath. That is true, but I wyll fol-

low

how our forefathers, now there is no loue, then they liued in friendshippe, and made merrie together, now there is no good neighbourhoode: now euery man for himselfe and are readie to pull one another by the throate.

Zelot. There are but a fewe of your minde in this thing, are there?

Ah, yes the greatest parte: for I know almost none, but they will affirme this matter.

Zelot. If the greatest part to bee of your minde, wherefore is there not then a greate deale of loue and friendshippe where you saye there is none? why doo yee not beeinge the most in number, repaire the ruines of that olde faithfull friendshippe, whiche yee say is decayed? yee saye that there was loue and friendshippe, and yee seeme to lament the want of them, and yet there is none in your selues: for yee be verie full of malice and strife: is there any buzzard so blinde, but that hee may espie your grosse follie and vanitie in this point: when with open mouth, ye crie for loue loue, and bee the greatest enemies thereunto your selues.

Moreouer yee followe your owne fonde and

and doatinge opinion, that yee imagine a thinge whiche neuer was, for the Worlde hath euer beene like in selfe, full of debate and strife, a verye fewe in all ages which haue had true loue. Againe, you call none loue, but that carnall loue, whiche is in eatinge and drinking, and other foolishe delightes. That whiche is the true loue, you condemne to bee hatred: For if a man admonishe and reproue you for anye naughtie viee, whiche is the greatest loue: by and by yee stampe and stare lyke madde men, and saye nowe there is no loue, excepe a man doo flatter yee, and bee partaker of your foule and beastlie sinnes, yee are at deadlye hatred with him. But lette vs returne againe too Syr Robert. Yee sayde hee was as good a liuer as the beste of them all.

Ath. I saye so still, for hee is content with his liuing: many of your spirituall men are neuer satisfied: for with that poore liuing he hath, hee doth keepe a good house and doth feede the poore.

zelotes. You goe about to proue him to bee a good Liuer, by comparinge hym with those whiche are worse: It is all one

as

as if a man woulde proeue a theefe whiche hath ſtolne twentie pound to be a good theef, becauſe he is not ſo euill as he, which hath ſtolen a thouſand poundes.

Ash. Yée doe not well to compare true men with theeues.

zelot. Is not he a theefe which doth take the hire and doth not that which he ſhould do for it?

Ash. Yée is as good as a théefe, I think ſo.

zelot. Doe not they robbe them whiche take the liuing and do not feede the flocke? Let me aske ye a queſtion, if a man robbe and ſteale and kéepe a goodly good houſe, and feaſte his neyghbours with it, and bée a Murtherer, will his good houſe keeping make him a good Lyuer?

Ash. No that it will not.

zelot. Let me aske yee another queſtion, which is the worſe murtherer, he which doeth murther the body, or he which doth murther the ſoule?

Ash. Yée which doth murther the ſoule.

zelot. Then

zelot. Then hee which shoulde feede mennes bodyes commeth vnto him, and doeth pyne them to death, is a murderer: and hee which shoulde feede mens soules and doth starue them, is a greater murtherer, and so his good house keeping cannot make him a good man, robbing so manye, and killing so many.

Ath. I will not beleeue that hee doth kill any.

zelot. That is because ye will not beleeue the saying of Christe: if the blinde leade the blinde they both fall into the diche, nor that GOD will saue men by the woorde preached.

Ath. I hope wee be not blinde, I trust we beleeue all well.

zelot. You are blinde and shoulde haue a guide to leade ye the way to heauen, and to instruct ye in true godlinesse.

Ath. I will not learne the way to heauen of any man, for I hope I haue as good a fayth and as good a soule to Godward as the best learned of them all.

zelot. Wherby doe you trie your goodnesse and your faith, any other way then by your own blinde fantasie?

Ath. I

Ach. I meane well: I hurt no man: no: I thinke no man any hurte: I loue God aboue all: and put my whole truste in him: what would yée haue moze? they preach and teach, they can tell vs no moze but this: when they haue all sayd what they can.

zelot. Nowe yee tumble it vp together in deede: I see well it is no small trouble, to bringe an ignoraunt man, for to see his folly.

Ach. I haue vttered my conscience: if I saye not well, I am readye for to learne.

zelot. What neede you learne when you knowe all afore hande euen as much as all the preachers can tell ye?

Ach. Yée take me at the woꝛst, the wiſeſt of vs all may learne.

zelot. You saide that yee loue GOD aboue all: and you thinke no man no hurt, I take it your meaning is, that yee doe loue GOD with all your hearte, and your neighbour as your selfe, and more then this cannot be taught.

Ach. Wée should doe this, if we do it not, God foꝛgiue vs.

zelot. This is all, is it not, what needeth

deth any more teaching.

Ath. Let men doe this first, and afterwarde, if they will learne more, let them.

Zelot. Yee giue very graue aduise nowe, if there were any to follow it.

Ath. I haue no learning, but I think if men would do this, it would not be so euil as it is.

Zelot. If euery thing which is spoken truely, be spoken wisely, then you haue vttered a very wise saying, for I am sure there can not be a truer. I beleeue indeede yee haue no learning, and I am sure as you say, if mē should doe that, there would not be so much euill among vs.

Ath. Yée thinke peraduenture that I speak like a fole. I would I were as wise as those which I heare say so.

Zelot. Haue ye many of these great Wise men, which woulde haue men first fulfill the ten Commaundements and then run to heare sermons.

Ath. All things are well spoken which are well taken: if they be not wise I pray God make them wise: I haue nought to do with them.

Zelot. Yee

Zelot. Yee are a playne man and haue skill in outwarde thinges, will yee giue mee leaue to aske you a question in a matter wherin yee haue vnderstanding?

Ath. I thanke God I dare answere to a question.

Zelot. Are yea Carpenter or mason?

Ath. I haue no skill that way.

Zelot. Then if there bee a great house of tymber and stone, to builde, you cannot build it?

Ath. If there were no better builders then I, there woulde not be so many gaye houses.

Zelot. If one shoulde say heere is a verie faire House too bee builded, it is no more but to lay a good foundation, too rayse vppe the walles and to finish the roofe, you knowe this all: therefore yee canne build it, for yee know all.

Ath. I know this is al: but I can do neuer a whit of it, vnlesse a carpenter or a builder doo teache mee.

Zelot. Yee saye well, euen so too loue GOD with all our hearte, with all our mynde, and our Neighbour as our selfe, is

is all, but wee knowe not howe to doe one iotte of it, vnleſſe we be taught it out of gods worde.

Ath. God graunt we may, for there be ouer many which doe not regarde it.

Zelot. Let mee nowe aske you further, put caſe one ſhoulde ſaye vnto you, thus, you know all that is to bee done in building an Houſe: the foundation, the walles, and the roofe, doe theſe firſt, if yee will learne any more, yee may goe to ſome Carpenter

Ath. There is no man ſo fooliſh, to giue a man that counſell.

Zelot. It is the Counſell you gaue, and the wiſe men whiche yee ſpake of, whiche would haue men firſt to doo and afterwarde to learne.

Ath. Paye to doe that they knowe, and afterwarde to learne more: for there was neuer more knowledge and leſſe doing.

Zelot. It is a verie pitifull caſe to ſee how the world is blinded, yee bringe not this out of your owne bouget: for there bee verie manie wiſe and ſollye heades, whiche ſtande muche vppon this whiche you ſpeake: they neuer vnderſtoode that whiche Salomon

ſaith,

mon saieth, Prouerb. 1. cap. 22, ver. Yee fooles be enemies vnto knowledg, or hate knowledge. Neyther doe they knowe that which Sainte Paule speaketh 1. Cor. 8. 2, If any man thinke hee knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing as yet, as he ought to knowe. They neuer considered what the holy Ghost saieth in the latter end of the fift chapter to the Hebrewes. ver. 12. Where he doth sharplye reproue them, because they were children in vnderstanding. Neyther doe they know that all well doing proceedeth from faith, and faith doth increase through knowledg. It greeueth me to stand vpon the matter, the saying is so buzzardly.

Ath. You would haue al men diuines, I think it is not so, plowmen to meddle with the scriptures.

Zelot. You thinke so, but I pray you to whome speaketh the Lord by the Prophet Esay, when he saieth: My people perish for want of knowledge. Vnto whom speaketh the Lorde by the Prophet Oseas, Chap. 4. 1 2. When he saith: there is no trueth, there is no mercy, nor knowledge of God in the lande, But swearing, lying, killing, theeuing, committing aduoutrie, &c. Vnto whom wrote Saint Paule, saying: Brethren be children in

malice, be not children in vnderstanding, and vnto whome wrote Saint Peter exhorting so much vnto knowledge?

Ach. I thinke knowledge doth make men the worse, for there be no worse men then many that be great scripture men: none will deceiue a man sooner then they: they will speake a man fayre to his face, and be ready behinde his backe for to cut his throte.

Zelat. It seemeth that you are no small man, there is a great deale of good stuffe in you if you would vtter it.

Ach. I tell ye my minde plainly, I will not flatter any man.

Zelat. Ye neede not tell me that, I knowe what manner of man yee bee. But to come to your last words, ye did speake very lewdly, do yee thinke that knowledge doeth make men worse?

Ach. I beare many say: if I speake lewdly, there bee a number more beside me that doe so.

Zelat. If knowledge make men the worse, then is it a thing that is not good of it selfe, for that which is good cannot make a man euill: is there any beast which will say, That to know GOD or the will of

God which is most holy and pure, can make a man the woorse? No these men are more then beastes. *Againe*, the more a man knoweth of God the worse he should be, a very filthie blasphemie.

Moreouer you are greatly deceiued, when yee thinke that all those whiche canne talke of the Scriptures haue knowledge, for there be verye many carnall Prattlers, which seeme for to know much, and yet are as blinde as Buzzardes: these are naughty men, not because they haue knowledge, but because they want knowledge.

Ath. I cannot tell, a man shall heare them saye a great deale out of the Bible.

Zelot. No doubt a great deale more then they vnderstand: now when such do not liue well, doth it followe that Gods woorde maketh them woorse? nay yee beall blinde Asses whiche cannot see, that because there is verye little true vnderstandinge of Gods woorde amonge men, therefore there is so much vncleanesse: For as the holy Ghost saith Psal. 119. 9. Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way euen by taking heed thereto according to thy word. Now when men doe not vnderstand the woorde, howe shall

they take heede to their wayes, for to guide them by the same. And when GOD sayeth the woorde doeth cleanse vs, his meaninge must needes bee, that all such as are not purged thereby, are foule and fylthie in his eyes.

Ath. Ye haue of your preachers, trim pulpit men, & can say very wel: but their deedes are as euil as other menes, for who is more couetous then they: they are neuer content vntil they haue heaped liuing vppon liuing.

Zelot. Such skilfull men as you, thinke if a man can preache or rather (as a number doo) prattle and haue a rowlinge tongue and can make some shew of learnynge, that by and by hee is a trime man, and hath great knowledge: when as indeede hee hath noe true knowledge. For I count him to haue true knowledge, whiche hath so learned Christ, that hee is become a newe creature. Therefore Saint Iohn in the 3. Chapter 5. 6. verses. of his first Epistle speaking of Christ, saith: That he was made manifest to take away our sinnes, and in him is no sinne. Whosoeuer abideth in him sinneth not. Whosoeuer sinneth hath not seene hym nor knowne him. Likewise in the first booke of Samuel,

Chap. 2.

Chap. 2. vers. 12. It is saide by the sonnes of Elye, that they were the sonnes of Beliall, & knew not God: and yet they were instructed in the lawe, and taught the people. And for mine owne part I coulde neuer perceiue that any wicked man could preache worth a button: I meane concerning the cheefe thinge required in preachinge, whiche is the declaration of the power of the spirite which ought for to appeare, to the conuersion of sinnefull men. For to lay open poinctes of doctrine, they may doo it well.

Ath. **It is not for vs that are simple men for to iudge who doth well, and who doth not.**

Zelot. Yes that it is, for Saint Iohn saieth, trie the spirites whether they be of God: Our Sauiour Christ sayeth, my sheepe heare my voice a stranger they will not heare. Wherevpon it doth follow that hee whiche knoweth not when pure doctrine and wholsome is vttered, is not as yet among the number of the sheepe of Christ. For if he were indued with the sprit of God, hee should by the same spirite feele when wholsome doctrine is deliuered vnto him.

Ath. **If a man bee learned, then hee shal be able to iudge what is said rightly:**

otherwise he cannot tell.

zelot. It is not learning alone whiche muste iudge of sounde preaching, for there bee manie learned men which cannot iudge well, as also there bee many vnlearned, whiche are very well able to discearne, all lieth in this point, the doctrine is of God, & not of men, and therefore those doe feele it, and iudge rightlye whether they bee learned or vnlearned, whom God doth inwardly teache with his spirite. for this cause S. Paule, 1. Cor. 14. doth shew that the worde of God is so to be layde open in the congregation, that if there come in a man vnlearned or an infidell, hee may be reproued & iudged, and the secrets of his heart made manifest. For if the worde be not preached vnto the consciences of men, it goeth away like a dead sound. But we goe into many matters. I haue not forgotten your former wordes: but perhaps yee woulde bee loth to come to that againe,

Ath. I am not ashamed of any thing, which I said, and I hope I needde not.

zelot. No your wares are so fine, ye needde not care who view them, you loue God aboue all, and with all your heart.

Ath. What I doe, or els I were a beast, I would he were hanged whych doth not

shal.

Zelot. Ye loue your neighbour as your selfe?

Ath. If I doe not I pray GOD forgiue me, I am sure no man can accuse me.

Zelot. Then you looke by this meanes to come to heauen.

Ath. I hope if there be but three in al this countrey, goe to heauen I shall bee one of them, I meane so well.

Zelot. Ye know the commandements of God, and fulfill them also, doe yee not?

Ath. I thank God I know them: and will fulfill them as nighe as God shall giue me grace.

Zelot. Doe yee breake none of them?

Ath. We breake them al of vs daily & hourely: for there is no man which can keepe them all.

Zelot. You breake some of them, and keepe other some. Ye keepe the greatest, doe ye not? and breake the least?

Ath. I keepe the greatest, therefore I hope God will beare with me in the rest.

Zelot. Which do ye take for to be the greatest, that ye are so elders in?

Ath. I am no theefe, nor murtherer, nor traytour: I pay euery man his owne: I thinke this is Gods bidding.

zelet. Are there no greater, then these?

Ath. I take him for an honest man which doth keepe these, and he that doeth not, I defie him.

zelet. Euen so will I take you to be, when I know that you do keepe them: but I do maruell ye are so holde for to bid defiaunce to so many.

Ath. Doe not you defie them all: and all other euill doers?

zelet. If I should do so, you and I should be together by the eares by and by.

Ath. Then belike ye account mée to be such an one: yée ought not to iudge.

zelet. A man may know the tree by the fruites: but let this passe: I pray yee tell me, is not he which hath moe Gods, then one, as euill as a murtherer?

Ath. I take him to be worse.

zelet. Then the first commaundement is greater then those which you named?

Ath. If a man thinke there is anye God but one, he is very far wide.

Zelot. You haue none other Gods but one then?

Ath. It were pitie of my life if I should not be of that beléefe. If al the Commandements were as easie to be kept as this, we should doe well.

Zelot. Then ye neuer breake the first Commaundement.

Ath. Neuer in al my life: neither shal euer any make me to be but of Gods beliefe: for they which beléeue there be many Gods are not of a right minde.

Zelot. Can you then keepe the greter and not the lesse? I doe not doubte but if a man can keepe the first he can keepe all, for the first is as hard as any of the rest, although such skilfull Clearkes as you, counte it to be very easie.

Ath. Then it were an easie matter to keepe them.

Zelot. What if I proque vnto ye that you breake it, will you confesse your follie?

Ath. I wil neuer be made to beléeue that which I know is contrary.

Zelot. Let me aske ye this question: whether that man doth keepe this Commaundement, which thinketh there is but one God,

and yet giueth that honour & worship vnto other things, which he should giue vnto him alone.

Ath. I did neuer put any truth in images, nor I neuer thought they could doe me any good.

Zelot. I do not speak of that outward giuing away of Gods worship: but of another which is inward in the minde.

Ath. I haue alwayes had God in my minde, and I trust I haue neuer worshipped any besides him.

Zelot. Is not that a mans God, whiche he loueth best, and which he doth moste delight in?

Ath. I wote what a man loueth best & taketh most delight in, I think he maketh to his god, because we ought to loue god best of all.

Zelot. Doe ye not thinke that the thing which a man most setteth his minde vpon, & most seeketh after, is that which he most loueth?

Ath. I suppose euery man loketh after that which he most loueth.

Zelot. Then he which seeketh the world more then God, loueth the world more then God: and therfore in very deede maketh the world his God.

Ath. God

Ath. God forbid that any man shoulde make more account of this worlde, then of God, I hope fewe do so.

Zelot. You hope fewe do so, but a man may easily proue that you doe so, and I am sure the most do so.

Ath. I trust yee shall hardly proue it by mee, although yee iudge so euil of mee.

Zelot. Can a man seeke after God, or see his delight vpon God any other waye, then by seekinge after the knowledge and obedience of Gods will, which he hath reuealed in his word? or can a man loue God, and not loue his worde?

Ath. Gods worde is good, we must loue that all of vs, & be ruled by it, for it doeth tell vs nothing but that which is good.

Zelot. How slilie you wind out of the matter, I aske one thing which yee doe not answeare, and that is, whether a man can seeke God, and not seeke him in his word?

Ath. Euery man cannot be a Diuine, we that be vnlearned men are not for to meddle with so high matters.

Zelot. Now ye speake in your kinde, wee bee vnlearned men, we haue nought to doe with God, we may not meddle with him.

Ath. You take all thinges wronge,

yee

yet do not heare me say so.

Zelotes. Doe I take yee wrong, doo yee not say so? tel me is not God as high a matter as his word?

Ath. God is aboue all.

Zelot. Can wee haue to doe with God, to serue him any way but by his word?

Ath. The worde of God doth tell vs what wee are to doe.

Zelot. Then it followeth when yee saye wee may not meddle with so highe matters, that yee were euen as good for to saye, wee haue nought to doo with GOD. We owe hym no dutie of obedience, we need not care to know his will: because he is as high a matter as his word.

Ath. You put in a great deale more then I sayde, and take mee still at the worst.

Zelot. Naye you are so deepe in your speeche, that ye vtter more in a woord, then a man can well laye open in an houres talke: Againe I take yee not at the worst, for make the best of it you can, and it must needes follow, that those which care not for the worde of God, care not for him, neither do they delight in him, or loue him whiche doo not delight in him nor loue his word.

More

Moreouer howe shall a man take delight for to knowe the woorde, but it will cause him for to seeke to know it, that which is a mans lewell hee will some times looke vppon it: but there are a number of yee which are indeede verie Atheistes, and set not a strawe by the knowledge of Gods will, for let a man tell ye of any dutie which ye should be taught out of the holy scriptures, by and by, this is your answere, those thinges are not for vs to meddle with all: it is not for vs to talke of such pointes. But we are gone a great way from the beginninge of this matter, whiche is, that where yee did affirme that yee loue God with all your harte, and that yee haue none other Gods besides him: Now the conclusion is proued, that yee loue him as much as an old shoe, and that indeede yee make the world your God, because yee seeke most after that.

Ath. Yee do not vse mee wel in saying that I loue GOD no better then an olde shoe, I would ye should know I loue him as wel as the best of ye all, though indeed I cannot say so much.

Relat. Bee not angrie man, for it is but a small faulte, for a great sort moe doo beare yee companie, ye goe not alone. But because

yee

ye make so great boast. I pray ye tell me this, ye haue seruaunts, haue ye not?

Ath. I haue a poore household.

zelot. What doe you require of your seruant.

Ath. To obey my will and to do that which I command him.

Zelot. What if he care not so muche, as to knowe your will, but will saye: I will not meddle with so high matters, nothinge regardinge to knowe your pleasure: will yee say hee loueth yee, or hee is a good seruant?

Ath. I cannot say that hee is a good seruant, for if he were he would not take skorn but be glad to heare my will.

zelot. Yee say right, but why do ye not consider that, when God hath set downe his wil & you care not for to know it, that ye loue him as wel and doe him as good seruice, as such a seruant should doe vnto you.

Ath. God helpe, if this which he you say be true.

Zelot. It is most true, not only that men make the worlde their GOD, because they seeke more after it then they doe after Gods kingdom, but also *S.* Paul calleth the Diuell the God of this worlde, as also in another

place

place he saith, there be some whose God is their belly.

Ath. God forbid that any man should take the vnsell to be God, or doe him such honour.

Zelot. They are no smal number which make him their God.

Ath. You may say so, but I could neuer come into that mans company yet, by which I would not vtterly defie him.

Zelot. If I should professe great kindnesse vnto you now, and in the meane time drawe my dagger and breake your pate, would ye beleeue I were your friend?

Ath. I pray God keepe me from such friendes: which giue good wordes and doe euil deedes. I had rather they tolde me their hatred.

Zelot. Then ye answere that we must not looke what men say, but what they doe.

Ath. They had better not speake well, than speake well and doe euill.

Zelot. Likewise I answere you that we must not looke to mens woordes, when they defie the Diuell, but to their deedes by which they obey him and doe his will: for when they defie him in their wordes, they honour him for God in their workes.

Ath. I

Ath. If there be any lacke, I pray God amend them, for that is the worst wishe I will them.

Zelot. I could like your prayer well if it were not onelye for a fashion, as ye vse many such like. For when it commeth to the tryal, you wil easily be found among the number of such.

Ath. If ye thinke me to be such an one, ye iudge wrongfully therein: for any man did, I thank God I can bring many to testifie that I am an honest man & alwaies haue beene, I will be founde as good as your selfe, though ye make so great fault with other, as though ye were not lyke other men.

Zelot. I iudge nothing but that which is easie to see, in you and in a number more, and which I can and will proue to your face.

Ath. Yee are a straunger vnto me, will yee iudge of me, & knowe not what my workes are.

Zelot. Hee which cannot spy yee, hath but a simple vnderstanding: I pray yee tell mee, such as doe the workes and will of the Diuell, are they not of the Diuell? Saint Iohn 1. Epistle 3. saieth, Hee that commit-

teth

...ceth still from the Diuell. Likewise our Sauiour Christ calleth the obstinate Iewes, Ioh. 8. Which boasted themselues to be the Children of Abraham, and the Children of God, that they were of their father the Diuell, and why? because they did his will. Euen so you take part with such as are wilfully and wicked. Shall I aske you a little question?

Ah! Sir, aske what ye will, and speake what ye like best, but I will answere as well as I can.

Do ye not allow that all whoremasters, Drunkards, Dicers, Rayders, Swearers, and such like, are the Diuels armie, as on the other side, such as professe Gods word and liue godly, are his souldiers, ready to fight vnder his banner?

They are well holpen vp which I serue, such a maister haue I neuer had before.

Why are you so wilfull then, as to serue him: for all that will take parte with his wicked men, & spoile vpon his whole which are godly, they fight vnder the same standard, and seeke to vphold the kingdom of the Diuell, labouring for to ouerthrow the Gospel, and to banish Gods word.

They are loth to leaue their

honest man, or let be to shame your friend.

zelot. Thou art a common liing amonge all the pack of you, if there be any man which hath a zele to serue God, & liueth after his word, he will not refuse those healthy sins which ouerflow in all places, like as you which cannot abide to haue Gods word set forth, deuise a number of lies to slander against the, calling them Puritans, nouelers, & many such like. On the other part, if a man be drowsie & drunkard, a dicer, an ignorant beast which hath no knowledge of God, a wretched worldling, or any kind of such person, he is an honest man: for they be such as whome you would haue a man to be like for they are euen the honest men, which like the world best.

Ath. Wher be a number as you say for they cannot tel what they may say: they will not do as their honest neighbours do, they will be wiser then their betters: what should they meddle with the holy scripture, they will rather be busie in checking their neighbours, it was neuer merry since men medled with the scripture.

zelot. I marvel how far you would go if a man should follow you, yee are like a puddle, which the more it is stirred, the more filthy and stinking they are like a sticke, where the

the more a man stirreth, the more is the stink.

Ath. What meane ye by that?

Zelot. I meane that your heart is ful of foule stinking & rotte matter, which floweth out at your mouth. I confesse that those men bee not to be allowed which meddle with that which they should not: but I knowe whome you meane, when ye say they goe so far, that they know not what they may doe: ye speake of them which seeke to know God, whom ye thinke to be halfe madde.

Ath. There be some of the which are not learned, what shuld they do other wise the their fathers before the? I knowe some of their fathers, honest men, are neither troubled themselues that way.

Zelot. I did know your mind wel enough: for al your spite is against those which learne out of Gods word to know their duetie towards the lord: & because as S. Pet. saith, it, so they do not run with ye to the same excesse of riot, ye thinke it strange and blasphemy. Againe ye cannot abide to be admonished, when ye commit any naughtie thing. Ye know not that God hath appointed his word for al sortes of men to be instructed in it throughly, for the holy Ghost lieth not euery where into great knowledge in the word.

Againe ye know not that which the Lorde

cõmandeth in sundry places, that we shoulde admonish and reproue one another, if anye do amisse: & not as you blind obstinat men, which when a man doeth after a godly maner admonish yee: he is by and by a busie medler, what hath he to doe, he shal not answere for you. And because ye may not doe what lewdnes ye lyst, vncontrolled, yee say it was neuer merie since euery man might read the scriptures. It is marueilous that men should so become beastes without all vnderstanding.

Ah. It would not greeue me to be reproued by those which are learned, but now euery Jacke wilbe medling.

zelot. If you be reproued kindly by Gods word, then it is God which doth reproue: ye are not to looke vppon the man. But when ye call them Jackes, and giue them other reproches, it is because ye are blind, and can discerne nothing but that which is of this world. For if ye could see how great glorye the poorest true Christian is called into, to be the childe of God, ye would not reuile those who God honoureth.

Ah. They will be medling in matters of learning, if it were for great thinges it were the lesse euil, but a man may not be merye now.

Zelot. Beeyng vtterly blinde, and voyde of grace, yee count those sinnes whiche are foule and grosse, for to bee small: Iswearinge, raylinge, talkinge in your filthye ribaldrie, singing foul and beastly songes, these and suche like are your pety faults: this is your myrth which must not be hyndred: For it is death to yee to haue any godlynesse spoken of, if it be, ye cannot bee merry. This dunghil mirth is, that which men complaine of to be molested, and say it was happie in olde time, when men were not reproued for such thinges, now there bee so many scripture men, that a man cannot tell what to say or what to doe.

Ath. There are none of yée all as holie as yée woulde seeme for to be, but haue faultes, yée sée not your owne, but other mens.

Zelot. Hee whiche doeth not repent and correct his owne vitious nature and striue to obey God, is no good reproouer of others: But when yee say, men seeme to be holy and giue it as a matter of reproche, therein ye goe almost beyonde the Diuell himselfe: for you see that I gainesay yee, or els yee woulde not indure it, but ye would euen Powre out your stinking & rotten poyson lyke blasphemous and venemous beastes: ye would speake after

this manner you that are so full of the spirit, you that are Saintes and such like. What are you diuelles? are yee of the flesh? no doubt ye are vntil God conuert ye. But we may se how diuelishly men are become wicked: when a man cannot make any appearance to be godly and holy, but it is reproched as though it were a shamfull thing to be led by the spirite. For otherwise why do they so obiect an honest thinge to line after the flesshe, a shamfull matter to be guided by the spirite.

Ath. God helpe vs if none be good but such, I hope honest and quiet men shalbe saued as well as they, although they cannot talke so well, nor runne not to heare Sermons.

Zelot. Nay you would haue others in better case then they, for you iudge them that are zealous in the Gospell and woulde fainest of all other please God, to be the worst men, and the more carefull a man is to bee holye to the Lorde, the more he is disdained & misliked. Which doeth euidently shew that such as you are led by the spirit of the Diuell. Yee leade me so from one matter to another, that we are gone from something which yee vttered. I remember ye saide yee put your whole trust in God,

Ath, I

Ath. I say so, & so I say still: though I haue no learning, yet I trust I beleeue as well as they Scripture many of them all.

Zelot. I see bragge very boldly, I pray yee tell me this, are yee sure ye shalbe saued?

Ath. Yea and you blasphyer, nay the best of yee all, must confesse that too God.

Zelot. What is it that yee put all your whole trust in him for? is it not this, that GOD hath promised vnto yee eternall life, and that ye beleeue hee will performe his promise?

Ath. That he doeth loue me & giueth me all things.

Zelot. Are ye not sure that he doth loue yee?

Athe. I hope he doeth loue mee: but I am not sure.

Zelot. Doeth not the scripture say that whosoeuer doeth trust in him shalbe saued?

Athe. God sayeth so indeede, and I beleeue it is so.

Zelot. You know, doe ye not, that ye put your whole trust and beleefe in him?

Ath. I know I dos, and I hope I shall alwayes doe.

zelo. If God cannot lie, when he saith all they, that in him shal be saued, and you knowe that ye are one of them: Wherefore doe yee not then knowe that yee shalbe saued?

Ath. That which God saith, is true, for he can not lie. I put my trust in none but in him: I hope to be saued, what would yee haue more? I wot be many mens minde of them al whom they say they know shalbe saued. I think they imagine to make them selues Gods.

zelo. Naye such as you make your selues Gods, when ye ioyne things so contrary together and can make them agree, fire and water may lodge together in one bedde at your inne, and agree well together: For they are no more contrary then that which yee affirme, when yee saye, God hath promised that all which beleue in him shalbe saued, you are sure yee beleeue in him and that ye put all your whole trust in him & yet yee can not tell whether yee shall be saued. But I can not greatly meruell at this, for yee know as well what faith is, as doeth a Goose.

Ath. I trust I know, and I meane (I know) that my meaning howsoeuer you

you take me?

Zelot. Let mee aske yee this question, when a man prayeth if hee doo not beleeue that whiche hee saieth, doeth hee well?

Ath. We muſt beleeue that which we speake when we pray, or els it is nothing worth.

Zelot. When Christe teacheth vs too praye, and too call GOD our Father, ought we not for to knowe that he is our Father?

Ath. We ought for to knowe, that which GOD teacheth vs and to beleeue the same.

Zelot. Muſt wee not beleeue it without doubting or wauering as S. Iames sayth, hee that doubteth is lyke vnto a waue of the Sea tossed with the winde, neither let that man thinke that he shal receiue any thing?

Ath. We muſt not doubt, for hee that doubteth is in a wrong beleefe, we muſt put all our truſt in God.

Zelot. Then when yee call God Father ye beleeue that surely which ye speake, then are ye sure that he loueth yee, for a father doeth loue his childe, euen men which are euill doo giue good giftes vnto their children when they

they aske, because they loue the, much more the heauenly Father which is perfectly good doth loue his children, that is, those which beleeue in him: then I reason in this wise, hee that beleeueth surely that GOD is his Father he is sure that GOD loueth him: he that is sure god loueth him is sure of euerlasting life: therfore all those which pray aright, are sure they shalbe saued.

Ath. I pray GOD the may call vpon him.

Zelot. Tell mee further what ye thinke, was not *Abraham* sure he shoulde bee saued, likewise Dauid, Paul and others?

Ath. Euery man cannot bee like those. Can you saye yee are lyke vnto *Abraham*?

Zelot. Doeth not the scripture saye that *Abraham* is the father of the faithfull, and that those are the Children of GOD, whiche walke in the steppes of faithfull *Abraham*? I confesse indeede that euerie one can not attaine to so great a measure of faith as those had: but yet wee muste come to the same faith, because we haue the same GOD, the same couenaunt and promises, the same spirit is giuen vnto vs which beleeue. Saint Paule

Paule in the 4. chap. to the Ephesi, saith there is one God, one faith, one baptisme. If there be but one, then ours must be the same that theirs was.

Ath. Yea, but for all that, it is presumption for men to say they know they shalbe saued.

Zelot. I see that popish dung doth sticke stil betwene your teeth, when they teach men that it is presumption to be out of doube.

Ath. What tell yée mée of the Pope, I care not for him, I would both hee and his Dung, were buried in the dunghill.

Zelot. I know there be many which care not for the Pope, but yet beleeue muche of his doctrine: they be those which wee call Athiests, of no religion, but looke whatsoeuer any prince doth set foorth, that they wil professe.

Ath. I thinke that is good, ought not we for to obey our Princes, & would yee haue vs to take vppon vs for to bee wiser then they and their Counsellers?

Zelot. I did knowe yee were an Athiest, setting vpp menne in the place of

God

God worse then a Turke.

Ath. Wherfore doe yée say so?

Zelot. Tell me this, are wee for to obeye men if they commaunde that whiche is contray to that which God commaundeth?

Ath. I think not so.

Zelot. Is there any moe then one trueth, or one religion, which is the right, and that which GOD commaundeth?

Ath. There can be but one truth, that is certaine.

Zelot. Then when one Prince commaundeth one religion, another ariseth afterwarde and commaundeth the contrarye: wyll yee without difference obey them both? is not this for to denie God? is not this for to bee worse then a Turke?

Ath. I am sure yé will not deny, but that we must obey.

Zelot. Hee whiche doeth disobeye the Prince, doeth disobeye GOD, vnto his damnation, where the prince setteth foorth and maintaineth Gods worde. But if there be a prince which maketh lawes against the lawes of God, wee must obey GOD rather then men, But there are many as I said before, whiche in anye Princes dayes wyll speake thus, if religion should turne (saye they) as

GOD

God forbid it should be, but if it do, it is our parts to be obedient. Are not these Atheists, haue they not denyed God, when they serue men in his place? And looke no higher but what men commaunde. But ye haue drawne me away againe from the matter we were in hand with, where yee sayde it is presumption for a man to say he knoweth he shalbe saued: I may aske ye a question, I know ye will answere very boldly.

Ath. I know no cause why I should not answere boldly.

Zelot. Yee say true, for blinde bayarde is the boldest horse in the carte, although he be almost drowned in one slowe, yet he wil not sticke at an other, he wil through when al the rest wil straine curtesie. But let vs come to the matter, whether is it greater presumption for to beleeue that God is true, or for to doubt of the certaintie of his promises and whether doeth that man honour GOD most which giueth credit to his word, or hee which doubteth whether he wil performe the same?

Ath. It must néedes be graunted þ he onely beleeueth God of his worde doeth good, and he þ doth not, doth euil.

Zelot.

Prelat. Yee say true, for if a Prince make an offer vnto some man, whom he fauoareth, & hee should make answere, I doubt of it, I feare beleeue the performaunce of your promise: woulde not the Prince thinke him self greatly dishonored to haue it doubted, whether he be a man of his word? If he should sweare for the performance of his promise, & the partie not trust him, hee would neuer put that vp, or beare such an iniurie. Then it must needs folow, that whē God hath bound himself both by promise and by oth, as it is said Heb. cap. 6. ver. 17. How great presumption is it not for to beleeue him? it is all one as to thinke God may lye, or that he may be forsworne, which is horrible blasphemy.

Ath. I graunt this is true, if God should tel any man þ he should be saued if he did not then beleeue him. But where is the man which can say God euer told him so? doth he tell any one man so?

Ath. Yea that he doeth, for that which he sendeth vnto all in generall, he sēdeth vnto euery one in particular: for is it not al one, if a man be condemned for treason, to haue his pardon sent him being but one man alone, or hauing a great sort mo condēned with death with him, a generall pardon is sent for thē al?

Ath. That

Ast. That is al on, for he hath his part in it

Zelot. Euen so it is betweene God & vs, we were al condemned, he hath sent a generall pardon to as many as beleeue the same, that whosoeuer trusteth in Christ, he shalbe saued. God therfore hath told some mé, that is, such as beleeue that they shalbe saued, & such as doubt of his promise & his oth they shalbe damned. Therfore it is al one in those which beleeue, as if he had sent a particular message vnto them.

Ast. I neuer heard so much in al my life before.

Zelot. I beleeue so. For. S. R. can no great skill in this geare: hee can whip ouer a newe payre of cardes nimbly, and tyrle a dye: but he should bee the messenger of the Lorde of hostes, euen as the Prophet saith, his lyppes should keepe knowledge, and men should enquire at his mouth, hee should open all the counsel of God vnto the people, and not let them run headlonge as they doe vnto destruction. He should instructe them in all the doctrine of faith, and repentance, & so guide them in the feare of God.

Ast. Al men cannot doe alike, wée must accept their good wil, euery man can not be a preacher.

Zelot. Beecause yee care not for seeking

king after eternall life, yee are content to ac-
cept of nothing: and because yee loue your
lusts, and hate to be reformed, yee abhorre
the vse of preaching, and as poore a man as
yee are, ye would not for xl shillings ye had a
Preacher among you.

Ach. Be euer take me at the worst, I
allow preaching, it is good now and then,
but some can kepe no measure they tell
when they haue done: Again they be euer
hot and seuere, & preach damnation to y
people. Like wise they meddle with such
matters as they neede not, as Election &
Predestinatiō, what should such matters
be spoke of among the people, they make
men worse.

Zelot. I thinke the Diuel is the cunnin-
gest schoolmaister in the world. Other schoole-
maisters cannot bringe grosse heads and dul-
lardes to anye passe, but content themselues
with the finer wittes, for to traine them vp in
learning: but a man can almoste light vpon
none of his schollers, bee they neuer suche
blockheads, but they haue their lessou at their
fingers ends.

Ach. I thanke ye for your good
aduyse: But I neuer learned it of my Gram-
mel, nor neuer knew any of his schollers

truth I haue as little to do with him as you or any other.

Zelot. Where did ye learne it then, if not of the Diuell?

Ath. I haue heard honest men speak it, and some Preachers preach it.

Zelot. Then I perceiue ye learned it not of the Diuell himselfe, but at the mouth of some of his Vshers.

Ath. Wherefore doe ye call them the Diuelles Vshers? they haue skill in the word of God, and ought to knowe what they say.

Zelot. I cal them so because they teach the precepts of the Diuel. And although they haue some knowledge in the worde, yet they neuer learned these thinges whiche you speake out of the word.

Ath. Did the Diuel teach them because they haue it not in Gods word?

Zelot. It is the doctrine of the Diuell, because it is against Gods word. For God neuer teacheth men those things which are contrary to the doctrine which he hath set down in his word.

Ath. I thinke ye will hardly proue these thinges for you see against Gods word.

Zelot. I would you couldde as easilye proone your selfe to be a good man: for then we should soone agree.

Ath. You are not for to iudge of me: no more then I am for to iudge of you: but there be many nowe a dayes which will take vpon them for to iudge men: they do not learne that out of Gods word, I am sure.

Zelot. If I see a man drunken, or heare him sweare or raile and such like, and saie, he is a naughtie man, doe I iudge: shall I not count him a good man, when I see he is naught?

Ath. When a man doeth see those naughty vices, hee may boldly say y^t such men are naught.

Zelot. In like manner when a man heareth one which holdeth euill and abhominable opinions againste the trueth, her maie as boldlye saie he is naught: because they haue giuen iudgment of them selues, and haue shewed what they are. Nay they bee suche as you whiche take vppon yee for to iudge: for let a man be more carefull then your selues for to serue GOD: and by & by you will enter into the secretes of his hearte, which God onelie doth know, & ye will not

wicke for to pronounce that he is an hipocrite. In the meane time, let a man tell you that yee are wicked, when he doeth see your wickedbelle, yee answere, ye ought not to iudge: but I wil come for to prove that the things which ye speake against preaching, are verie diuelishe and wicked. Yee said thus, I allow preaching, it is good now and then, but some can keepe no measure, nor will neuer haue done.

Ach. I said so in deede, I will not deny any woorde, & I thinke so still. For a man may haue ouermuch of any thing, and enough is as good as a feast.

Zelot. A verie little is enough for you, if the Preacher do passe his houre but a little, your buttocks beeginne for to ake, and yee wishe in your heart that the Pulpitte would fall.

Ach. Ye may gesse twise before ye gesse so right.

Zelot. Naye I cannot gesse somewhat neere in suche a manne as yee are: but I praye yee did yee neuer sitte at Cardes all night?

Ach. Yes that I haue, and thought it but a short night to.

Zelot. The cause why yee thinke an

houre so long at a Sermon, and a whole night so short at Cardes, is, that ye delight in the one and care not for the other: the carding is ioyned with muche sinne and seruice of the Diuell, the other is for to bring vs vnto the knowledge and feare of GOD: Marke nowe howe much by your owne confession ye loue the Diuell more then GOD: for him doe ye loue most, whome ye delight to serue most.

Ach. Can we not serue God without so much preaching: I see they are neuer the better which runne most after sermons, they talke much, but I would haue them leaue talking and fall to doing, we see no doing but men are vil euen as euell as before.

Zelot. Can your seruant serue you vnlesse he knowe your will?

Ach. No that he cannot.

Zelot. No more can you serue GOD without the knowledge of his will, and as for the rest of your speeche, when ye cry out against preaching of Gods woorde, that it maketh men neuer the better, and ye would haue them leaue talking, and fall to dooing: I confesse there be a number which are counterfeite professors which liue not according

to

to the Gospell, and most commonly they haue
sacke, as haue but a little smacke of the Go-
spell, and yet thinke they know much, because
they want the meanes, hauing the woorde ei-
ther seldome or loosely preached. But I will
confute your vanitie another waye in this
point, tell me, are not these your sayinges?
where the woorde is sincerely preached, if a-
ny seeke to frame their liues after the same,
when they doe either by woorde reproue
your euill waies, or by deede refuse your
lewde maners: These men are full of the spi-
rite, these are precise fellowes, these are ho-
lie Saintes, these think them selues Gods fel-
lowes: these thinke them selues better then
all other men.

Ath. Wee say so in deede, there is good
cause why.

Ti. zelos. Then I pray ye tell mee howe these
two thinges can hang together, when yee saye
there is no amendement of life, and yet yee
complaine that they be ouer full of the spirite,
ouer precise, and such like. May not euery
man see, that yee pronounce thinges directly
contrarie the one to the other? that there is
no amendment, and yet in effect, yee saye, they
amend ouer fast.

Ath. Wee doe not say that any doe a-

mend ouer fast.

Tubr. When yee saye they are ouer holy, and what shoulde men bee so curious and full of the spirite, what is this but to say, that they amende ouer fast? Is not this to amend when men by the instruction out of Gods woorde come to repentaunce of their former sinnes? and haue a care too keepe them selues from the lustes of the lourus flesshe and of this woorlde. Do not you dayly finde as you are after a sorte blaspheme, when yee reproche men with the spirite? Is it a shame for a man now a dayes for to haue anye thinge to doe with the spirite of God? While a man doeth walke after the flesh in the lustes of vnclenneslie, hee is an honest man: But so soone as hee is indued with any grace, ye wonder at him as *Crowes* doe at an Owle, ye are ready to shame and mocke him out of his kinde. And as if the spirite of GOD were a spirite of dishonour and shame, yee mocke men with him. Wee may wonder at the longe patience of GOD, which hath this many yeeres suffered him selfe to bee dishonoured, his spirite vexed, his woorde despised, and hath not beene reuenged, but no doubte the longer hee hath taried, the heauier will the stroke be.

Ath. You are mery, what shoulde they

make

make themselues more holy the they be?

Zelot. If ye meane one way ye say right, for it is a naughtie vice for men to seeme too be holy when they are not, or to seeme to bee more holy then they be: but if ye meane another way (as I thinke ye doe) that because men are sinful by nature, why should they seeke for to be better, then doe yee speake verie wickedly. For God calleth men to repentance, to turne from their euill waies: God guideth his seruantes at all times with his spirite, therefore S. Paule saith Rom. 8. There is no condemnation nowe to those whiche are in Christe Iesus, whiche walke not after the flesshe, but after the spirite. And againe in the same chapter. As many as are led by the spirite of God, are the sonnes of God. Hee sayeth that if we liue after the flesshe, we shall die: in other places hee doeth shewe, whiche are the workes of the spirite, and whiche are the woorkes of the flesshe: And you like blasphemous wretches allowe those whiche walke after the flesshe, and condemne those which are led by the spirite.

Ash. Are none indued with Gods spirite, but such as runne to heare preaching?

Zelot. Whosoeuer hath the spirite of

God, cannot but delight in the woorde of God, whiche the same spirite hath vttered: The Lorde saith, hee which is of GOD, heareth Gods worde: The happye man is hee (as wee haue in the 1. Psalme) whiche hath his delight in the lawe of the Lorde, and whiche doeth meditate in the same daye and night? We haue in the Psalme 112. Blessed is the man which feareth the Lorde, hee hath great delight in his commaundements.

Moreouer, the spirite of GOD doeth not guide men without the woorde. And therefore it is saide Psalme 119. Thy woorde is a Lanterne vnto my feete, and a light vnto my pathes. S. Peter saith, 1. Epist. 1. Hee hath begotten vs againe not of mortall but of immortall seede, which hee affirmeth to bee the woorde of God that indureth for euer. Likewise S. Iames saith Chap. 1. of his owne good will begat hee vs, by the word of truethe. Seeing therfore that the holy Ghost doth guyde men by the worde, it followeth that all those whiche set light by the woorde, are led, not with the spirit of God, but with the spirite of the Diuell. I might alledge a number of testimonies of Scripture to proue that such as you which make so small accompt of the sacred woorde of God, as there bee a number,

yea

yes the greatest number whiche doe not so
smuche by it as they doe by an olde shoe,
are despicers of GOD, woorse then brute
beastes.

Faith. Cannot men beled by Gods spi-
rit and serue God, vnlesse they knowe the
Scriptures: GOD forbidde that al those
shoulde be alwey which are not learned: is
it not inough for plaine countrymen, plow
men, Tailoures, and such other, for to haue
their ten commaundementes, the Lords
prayer, and the Beleefe: I thinke these
may suffice vs, what shoulde wee meddle
further? I knowe men which are no scrip-
ture men, which serue GOD as well as
the best of them all. Wyll yee condemne
such?

Pilot. I sayde before that men can not
be led by Gods spirite, and refuse to knowe
the scriptures: Neyther canne they truelye
serue him vntill suche time as they knowe
howe for to serue hym: for GOD teacheth
howe hee will be serued, and hee teacheth on-
lye in his worde: his will is that we shal learne
to know him by his worde. And therefore he
hath appointed the Ministerie of the woord
to continue for euer in his Churche, that by
it men may bee built vp in Christe, as yee may

reade

made Ephe. 4. For this cause S. Paule exhorteth Tymothie to bee instant in teaching in season & out of season: he trauelled himselfe night and daie, he maketh a verie feruent prayer to GOD continuallie for the Colloſsians, that they might be fulfilled with the knowledge of his wyll, in all wisdome and spirituall vnderstanding. Colloſ. vers. 9. For this cause hee exhorteth the Christians to bee children in malice, but not to bee Children in vnderstandinge. The holy Ghoſt doeth sharplye reproue the Hebrewes as wee may see, in the latter ende of the 5. Chap. of that Epiſtle: because they were yet children and to be taught, when for the time they shoulde haue beene teachers. Againe there is a notable sentence in the beginninge of the seconde chap. of the Prouerbes, where a man maye plainly proue, that none can come to the feare of God, but such as doe earneſtlie endeuour for to knowe God. The wordes be these. My sonne, if thou receiue my wordes, & hide my commaundementes with thee, to incline thine eares to wisdome, and to bow thy heart to vnderstanding: if thou call for vnderstanding, and vtter thy voyce for knowledge: if thou seeke her as siluer, and digge for her as for hidde treasures. Then shalt thou vnder-

stande

finde the feare of the Lorde and finde the knowledge of God. If a man doe not receiue the woorde and commaundementes of God vttered by his Ministers, if he doe not keepe and lay them vp, if he doe not crye and call vpon God for vnderstandinge, if hee doe not inclyne his eares & bende his heart thereto, if he doe not searche and digge after her as men doe for treasures: hee shall not come to the knowledge of the feare of God.

Ath. All men cannot come to these thinges which you speake of.

Zelot. All men which will please GOD must come thus farre, that can saye with the Prophet Dauid in the 119. Psalme, I haue hidden thy woorde in my heart, that I might not sinne against thee. Also in the same place when hee hath asked the question: Wherewithall a younge man shall cleanse his waies, hee answereth, by takinge heede thereto according to thy woorde: wherby is most euident, that all those are vnpure in their waies, and sinne greeuously against God, which haue not laide vp his woorde in their hartes, nor cleansed their waies by the same.

But

But let vs come to some other of your sayings which I am greeued for to heare.

Ath. Yee needs not to be greeued for that does not hurt you.

Zelotes. I cannot but bee greeued for your grosse and palpable blindnesse, and I am the more greeued when I remember that many which are otherwise verie wise men of muche your doctrine sayinges, and thinke they speake very wisely. They say what should vnlearned men meddle farther then to say their ten commaundements, the Lordes prayer, and the articles of the faith. And you are of the same minde.

Ath. I trust to do as well with these as other with all their learning.

Zelotes. Doeyte thinke that yee shall doe well to vse them because ye can say them: although yee doe not vnderstande them?

Ath. Nay if a man say them, and do not vnderstand them, hee is litle the better, I know not why I should not vnderstand them, so long as God hath giuen mee my fiue wittes: I say no chiue, nor I am no foole.

Zelotes. Indeede hee that hath one good witte, is no foole, muche lesse are you which haue fiue: you must needes knowe all and

more

Andrew. For I think ye meane, that ye are able by reason to vnderstand those thinges.

Ath. I trust I vnderstand by that reason wherby God hath giuen me, so muche as is sufficient: I can tell when I doe well, and I can tell when I doe euill.

Zelot. I perceiue you are a free wil man, one of those which thinke by naturall vnderstandinge to conceyue the mysteries of GOD: And ye doe in deede vnderstande so much as is sufficient: not for to saue ye, but as S. Paule saieth. Rom. 1. to make ye without excuse: & so to condemne ye. You know some sinnes: and likewise yee can tell some thinges which are good: but yee can neuer tell anye thing whiche ye haue done that is good.

Ath. I trust God will be more fauourable then you are: and that he will not forgette the good deedes which I haue done.

Zelot. A very little box I warrant you will holde all your deedes, if ye haue no more olde deedes then you haue good deedes.

Ath. Are not these good deedes, when a man doth giue to the poore, and is redy to do his neighbour a good turne: whe a man

doth

doth liue honestly, feare God, & thinke no man any harme.

Zelot. Now ye speak of cost: now ye are hit into your right vaine again, euen when ye would be, to boast of those thinges which ye haue not: for none of al those or such like are good in you, because they do not proceede of faith: for S. Paul saith Rom. 14. vers. 23. Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne.

Ath. How can ye proue that mine are not of faith?

Zelot. Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word. Rom. 10. 17. Where a man despiseth the word, there can be no faith: because faith is grounded vpon the worde, and doth not beleeue thinges contrarie vnto the woord. Moreouer, they be not your fiue wits, (as you tearm them) which can make you able for to vnderstād the misteries of Gods word, For they cannot be vnderstood as S. Paul teacheth. 1. Cor. 2. 11. Vnlesse God reueale them by his spirite: for euen the wicked whiche seeme to know them, doe not knowe them aright. But let vs come for to see how well ye doe vnderstand the tenne commaundements. Do ye not looke to come to heauen, by doing of them?

Ath. I doe them as nigh as God will

giue

giue me grace, I trust God will not require more at my handes then I am able for to doe: I am as hee made me: if he had made mee able for to doe better, I should do more.

Now yee are in a deepe peece of diuinitie, ye think this is so equall which yee vtter now, that al the Doctours in the world are not able to controll yee. Ye say yee doe what yee can, more GOD cannot require at your handes: you meane as if one shoulde make this comparison: A Father cannot require no more of his childe then his strength will serue, a Prince can commaund his subiecte no impossible thing: if a father should whippe his children for not doing that which he is not able, it were crueltie: If a Prince should put a subiect to death for not dooing his commaundemente in a matter vnpossible, it were tirannie: the father will saie, My childe did his good will, I can aske no more: The Prince will say he hath done that which a man might, and further I cannot require. Likewise you thinke GOD shoulde deale straightly with ye, if he shoulde condemne yee for breaking the Lawe, which yee are not able to obserue: & that he cannot looke for more at your handes then he hath made yee

able

able to performe.

Ath. I meane so in deede, flesh is frail, we cannot doe all things.

Zelot. I pray yee tell me, doe ye thinke any shal goe to hell and be damned?

Ath. The scripture saith there shal, doth it not?

Zelot. Wherefore doe yee thinke they shalbe damned?

Ath. For breaking Gods commaundements.

Zelot. Are they able for to keepe them?

Ath. No man is able for to keepe them.

Zelot. Shall they then be damned for euer in hel fire, for breaking those lawes whiche they were not able to keepe?

Ath. Not if they had done their good will: For then they coulde not bee blamed.

Zelot. Howe the Diuell hath muffled you to keepe yee from the seeing the daunger of eternall damnation whiche yee are in: haue yee neuer heard that which GOD sayth by Moses, which S. Paule citeth in the 3. Chap. to the Galath. Cursed is euerye one whiche abydeth not in all thinges which are writ-

ten in the booke of the law for to doe them: by which ye may see that God with his owne mouth doth lay his curse (which is damnatiō) vppon euery one which doth breake neuer so little of the lawe.

Ath. GOD is mercifull, hee is not so seuere as you would make him for to bee.

zelot. Doe yee not thinke that he is a iuste and a true God?

Ath. I must needs think so.

zelot. Doe ye think that when hee hath vttered his iustice, that hee can by his mercie goe from it, and so bee founde vntrue? Nay, there bee many of yee whiche in all thinges crie God is mercifull, GOD is mercifull, which neuer consider with what conditions GOD hath promised mercie, neither howe it may stande with his iustice and trueth: yee thinke GOD offereth mercie without exception.

Ath. If God be not mercifull wee are but in an euill case.

zelot. Hee is a most mercifull and gratious God, but yet not vnto any, but suche as he hath promised mercie. Howe many thowsandes there bee, whiche are caried headlonge to hell with this errour, which not knowinge

the iustice and trueth of GOD, doe hurle them selues where God hath accursed them. For these thinges whiche you haue now rehearsed, are euen of the principall reasons whiche Satan doeth seduce men withall, and holde them from the trueth. They thinke thus, I do what I can, God hath made me able to doe no better, God is mercifull, they knowe not this, that God made vs able in our firste creation to keepe and obey his will wholy, and that although wee can now keepe no parte of it, yet hee may iustlye accurse and condemne vs vnto eternall fyre, for tradisgressinge any part of it: ye are not as he made yee, and therefore yee deceiue your selfe when yee thinke that hee requireth no more at your handes, then ye are now able for to doe. Ye deceiue your selfe, when ye thinke that GOD can be mercifull vnto ye, and you liue without repentance.

Ath. You would make a man dispaire if ye would put him out of hope in the mercie of God.

Zele. I would not bring ye out of hope in the mercie of God, but I would bringe ye out of your vaine hope, whiche is not that which will saue ye, but doth harden and blinde ye vnto damnation.

Ath. How can a mans hope & fayth in God, harden & blind him vnto damnation, how ye sayes ther is nothing among many of ye but damnation, damnatio. It is well y God hath not giuen you power for to condemne men.

zelot. If it were a true fayth, it must needes saue them, but being a fayth which is blinde, it blindeth those which haue it, and hardneth them in their sinnes, and keepeth them from the seeking after the knowledge of Gods wil, and stayeth them from returning home vnto God by true repentance, because it breedeth this in the heartes of men, to thinke and to say, we are well ynough, we trust in Gods mercie, wee beleeue as well as the best of them al: when as if they were ridde out of this notable snare of the Diuell, and brought for to see the wrath of GOD bente againste them, they woulde then be glad with feare and trembling to seeke after the Lorde in his woorde, and to be afrayde to committe those thinges whiche might displease him. Where as nowe a man may crye vntyll hee rende his throate againste their contempt of the Lordes worde, and againste their fowle sinnes, beefore hee canne mooue them at all: and why? be-

cause the diuell hath gotten them within this fortresse: God is mercifull, God is mercifull. And for your other foolish words, that there is nowe nothing but damnation damnation: Do ye think that men are euer the sooner cast into damnation, because they are told of the great daunger thereof?

Ath. I pray ye let me see what good can come therof.

Zelot. If I should meete ye by the way and perceiue that yee were going into the way where yee should light among theeues, whiche would murther ye, which were most profitable for you, if I should tell yee, thus, yee be well, ye be well, or to shewe ye that ye be in daunger of your life, if yee passe that way?

Ath. That were a wicked part for to let a man go where he should lose his life & not for to tell him.

Zelot. Wherefore doe ye not see then that those which doe shew ye the daunger of damnation doe it for your profit, as well as they which teache yee to auoide some outwarde daunger. If a man tell ye thus, goe not that waie, ye will be robbed, ye will be killed, doeth it followe that he will robbe or kil ye, because ye saie, men nowe vtter damnation,

and

and that it is well they haue not power to condemne men. And know this for certeintie, that if God in his word doe threaten damnation, and the Preacher doe not shew it to the people, and teache them how to auoyde the same, their blood shall be required at his hande. But let vs come backe againe to the former matter to see howe well yee vnderstand your x commaundementes. I would know this of yee, whether it be good for men to knowe the law, seeing it doeth nothing but curse and condemne vs: if there were no lawe, there coulde bee no sinne. I speake both of the law of nature, and of the lawe written, and if there were no sinne, ther could be no condemnation: For this cause the lawe is called the ministerie of death and condemnation, and it is called the letter which killeth 2. Corinth. 3. Seeing it doeth woorke all this, what profit can it bring for to know it, or why should it be preached?

Ath. I pray yee tell you me, for I am vnlearned, and you are learned. If it bee as you say, I thinke it were good not to preach it: if it doe condemne vs.

Zelot. What a shame is it that a man of your age should haue so little skill, as not to know to what purpose the law serueth. It is

a token ye vnderstand your x. commaundements well. I will tel yee, when a man knoweth the lawe, it doth bring him to see that he is altogether corrupted with sinne, both in bodie and soule, that he is vnder Gods heauie indignation and curse: and that in himselfe there is no helpe at all: it casteth him into feare and terrour of Gods iudgementes, and so inforceth him to seeke for remedie in Christe, whome before he did not greatlie seeke after. For looke how a man which doth not thinke himselfe sicke nor in daunger of sickenesse careth not for a Phisition: so he which doth not knowe his damnable estate by the lawe, careth not for Christe. This is the cause why Christ saith: The whole needes not the Phisition, but the sicke, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentaunce. Therfore to such as haue wounded consciences, the Gospel is sweete and comfortable: and Christe in the latter ende of the eleuenth Chapter of S. Matthew, calleth such vnto him, saying: Come vnto me all ye which trauell and bee heauy laden, And I will refreshe ye. But such as haue no feeling of their sinnes, or which are blinded and hardened, ye shall perceiue small ioye and delight in them for to heare the worde preached:

theis they had rather be at Beareayting.

Ath. Ye say well, I would I could remember your woordes.

zelot. There bee many whiche will seeme to bee desirous for to learne, but a man shall see, they continue euen as careleſſe as beefore: But I will goe on with this matter. The Scripsure saieth, that a sorowfull spirite is a sacrifice to God: and that God doeth not despise the humble and contrite heart: But men are afraide to be brought to the knowe-ledge and feeling of their sinnes for feare as they saye, least they shoulde be driuen into dispayre: as thoughe that were a safe protection for them for a time to bee in a senseleſſe securitie: and as though they were in the better case, because they make no conscience of their sinnes. Whereas indeede thoſe whiche are pricked and wounded with their sinnes, are in the way to repentance, when the other are farre off.

Ath. I could like your woords the better, but ye would haue men not to truſt to their faith: is it not good to beleeue well?

zelot. There is nothing good in men, valeſſe they beleeue well: and wee can not truſte too muche vnto faithe: but you doe not vnderstande what faith is. Tell

me this, doeth faithe beleeue accordinge as GOD setteth downe, and speaketh in his woorde, or doeth it beleeue contrary to that which God vttereth?

Ath. **It doeth not beleeue contrary to that which God vttereth.**

Zelot. Lette vs see then, when God setteth downe and sheweth which are the works of the flesshe, and threatneth damnation vnto all those which walke in them; when GOD setteth downe that the despisers of his woorde shall be condemned: and yet men which are defiled with the filthinesse of the flesshe, and walke after their corrupt lustes doe boldelye bragge that they beleeue to bee saued, & setting naught by Gods woorde, saye they truste in God: Is this faith? God affirmeth one thing, and yet they beleeue the contrary: but see the blindnesse of men now a dayes, when they heare vaine and brutishe men boast of their faith, yee doe well saye they, to haue a good beleefe, whereas in deede it is no more but a proud presumption, wherwith GOD is highlye displeased, because by it they woulde make him a lyar. When the sonne of man commeth, shall hee finde faith in earth? If this be faith, he shall finde great plentie of it euerywhere, for the idolater, the whoremonger, the drun-

drunkard, the proude, the Adulterer, are as full of faith as they can be thrust. For euerye one of these doeth bragge that hee hath as good a faith to God as hee which is the most holy of all.

Ath. These may repent and be saued, or els God forbid.

Zelot. I doe not speake what God is able to doe in callinge as hee doeth call some such vnto repentaunce: but what they haue in them presently. But I will see a little further howe great skill you haue in the Law of God, because ye neede so little preaching. What say ye vnto the second cõmandement, is it lawfull for a man to worship idoles?

Ath. I thanke God I do not worship any, for that is flatly forbidden.

Zelot. What say ye for the making of anye image or picture of God, do ye think that is amisse?

Ath. For makinge it is no matter, so that a man haue no confidence in them.

Zelot. Howe do yee then vnderstande the woordes of the commaundement, whiche saye, Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, &c.

Ath. Yt meaneth that wee should not make any grauen Image to the intent to worship

worship it.

zelotes. That is your owne addition, for there is no suche exception expressed, neyther can the order of the commaundements beare it: for he doth not say, Thou shalt not make to the intent to worship, but thou shalt neither make nor worship.

Ath. If you take it so, then why are Paynters allowed to make anye pictures, how is it lawfull to haue the image of the Prince in coyne?

zelotes. I will shewe yee your errour, you doe not vnderstande that the lawe was deuided into two Tables, and that in the first Table, which hath 4. commaundementes, there is nothinge commaunded or forbidden, but that which respecteth immediatly the worshippe and honour of God, her medleth not with any ciuill or politicke matter, hee doeth absolutely forbid to make as I may tearme it any diuine image, any similitude for to represent God, or to be like him: because as the scripture sheweth, there can no likenesse or similitude bee made of God. For hee is a spirite of glorye, infinite, incomprehensible. Which dwelleth in light, whiche none cannot come vnto: and therefore he may reade in the Epistle to the Rom. cap. 1. how horrible a sin

it

is was to set vp any image or likenes of God: therfore the pictures of the trinitie and such like are very abhominable. But to let this passe, what say ye for the worshipping of them, whether is it idolatrie, or not, if a man meane to woorship God by the image, and not the image it selfe.

Ach. How can that be idolatrie, when a man doth woorshippe none but God, hee knoweth that the image cannot helpe him.

zelot. Then your meaning is, that, vnlesse a man do either worshippe the very image it selfe, or else some false God in the image that it is no idolatrie?

Ach. I see no reason to the contrary: and I thanke GOD I neuer was so fo-lish as to take a block or a stone for to be God.

zelot. Then yee thinke your selfe cleere in this commaundement, ye were neuer any idolater: ye neuer kneeled or prayed vnto any idoll?

Ach. I haue kneeled before them, and prayed before them, but I neuer take thē to be God, neither did I pray vnto any, saue vnto the Lord God. I trust God will neuer charge me to be an idolater.

zelot. Al-

Zelot. All you Atheistes which haue no knowledge of God, are crammed as full of popishe drosse as ye cannie hold, hauing that ye wil not abyde by it, but goe with the huge rout of princes, afrayd to loose the worlde: because ye haue made the worlde your God.

Ath. I defie poperie as much as the best of ye all.

Zelot. Euen as much as ye defie the Diuel, whome ye serue dayly. For yee vse popishe reasons to excuse your falling from God by Idolatrie, and whereby a man may easily see that you are ready vnto it againe if time serued.

Ath. I see I must let ye alone to iudge what ye list.

Zelot. Nay ye vse the verie popishe reasons: whereby they would proone when wee charge them with the breache of this commaundement, that they doe not committe Idolatrie: for say they, when the scripture doeth condemne that sinne, it is meante of such as worship fained Gods, as the heathen men did, or such as doe worship the image it selfe, and take it for to be God. But I will deale with ye by Gods woord. What doe ye suppose of the children of Israell, when they came to *Aaron*, to haue him make them

Gods

Gods to goe before the, when Moses taryed so long in the mount did they comit this great sinne of Idolatrie?

Ath. They did commit idolatrie, & the booke saieth they were destroyed, a great number of them.

Ath. What was their intent to woorship apie besides the true God?

Ath. That it was, for they desired Aaron for to make them Gods.

zelot. What think ye they tooke Aaron for to be a man, or a God?

Ath. That is a question in deede: how could they thinke him to be a God?

zelot. Did they thinke that Aaron beeinge but a man had power for to make a God?

Ath. If they thought so, they were but fooles.

zelot. And if you thinke they thought so, yee shall proove no great wise man. For which way can a man perswade any, that a man can make a God? Or could they become more brutishe then a Calfe, for to beleeue, that the earedringes of golde turned into the similitude of a Calfe, were nowe becomme GOD? No my friende it is very plaine, that they meant no more but an image of GOD

and

and that which should represent God, & pu
thein minde of him, ye must not thinke the
were so foolish although they were very fo
lish as the holy Ghost in one psalm, charget
them, that they turned their glory into the
militude of a Calfe which eateth haye: Thi
then is playne enoughe, that they meant no
for to worship the golden Calfe it selfe, but
God in the Calf. Let vs see the, did they meane
for to worship any other by the Calfe, beside
the true God?

Ath. It seemeth they did, or els why shuld
they say Deus, for there is but one God.

Zelot. Nowe take light vpon a very poore
shifte: for we may as well saie: This is thy
God O Israel, or make vs a God to goe bee
fore vs. For the Scripture it selfe in the He
brew tongue, although it teache that there is
but one God, yet speaketh of him in the plu
rall number, and saith Gods, for excellencie
or dignities sake; as we see Princes here in
the worlde when any of them speaketh, hee
doth not say, I, but we, not my person, but
our person. For the phrase of the Scripture
I might alledge diuers places, but you can
not vnderstande, but in your owne tongues
Nevertheleſſe I will cite one, it is in the Pſal.
Elohim Shophetim Hu: God is the iudge.

but

but the wordes at Gods, he is iudge.

Ath. Can you proue that they meantt to worshippe none but the true God?

zelot. It is easie to be proued, both by the wordes of the people them selues, when they saye, these bee thy Gods O Israell, which brought thee out of the lande of Egypt: they meante not to chaunge their GOD whiche brought them out from Pharao, and leade them through the redde Sea: neither did they thinke that the Calfe whiche Aaron hadde made, was hee whiche deuided the Sea, and drowned Pharao with his Hoast, but they tooke it for an image of GOD, and not of any feyned GOD, and also by the wordes of Aaron, when hee saieth: To morrowe shall be a feast to Iehouah, whiche name was neuer giuen to any, but to the GOD of Heauen, at the least in those dayes, the GOD of Israel had that name peculier vnto hymselfe. Then yee may see they worshipped not the Idole in false, but God in the Idole, they meant not to worship any false God, but the GOD of heauen, which had deliuered them, and yet they did commit foule Idolatrie and fell from God, in so muche that GOD was exceedinge wrath with them. Likewise in popery ye fell from God when ye bowed vnto images.

Ath. I

Ath. I hope not, because I did not as they did, they put a deuotion in it, I ment no suche thinge, but to be obedient to a lawe.

Zelot. Then your meaning is, that you kept your heart and conscience to God, and went with your body but for fashion?

Ath. So long as I did keepe my conscience and heart to God, I trust I did well enough.

Zelot. Then you thinke God requireth not to bee worshipped but with your soule, & that you may serue the Diuell with your body. Ye thinke also that God doth not require the outwarde confession of the mouth, although it shoulde bee withoute life.

Ath. Why doe not heare me saye, that wee may worshippe the Diuell with our bodies.

Zelot. You might heare your selfe say so, but that ye say ye know not what for indeede ye are ignorant, that the worshippe of images is the worshippe of Diuels. But I knowe there be many trimme wiseheades, which excuse themselues & cleare themselues this way, that they make no deuotion of the image, or any other thinge in the seruice of

the

the Pope their conſcience is free to GOD, they ſerue and feare him, what doth it hurt the although they come outwardly with their bodie, vnto the other: what ſhoulde they indanger themſelues in ſo ſmall a matter? But wil ye heare me what I can ſay out of Gods woorde againſt you, and ſuch fellowes?

Ath. I will heare you gladlye, I am not ſo wilfull, as not to heare.

Zelot. There were amongeſt the Corinthians, diuers Chriſtians whiche were perſwaded that it was a matter indifferent to goe to the Idole Temple, and there to ſit at the feaſt with the infidels, whiche they made in honour of the Idole, and to eate of the meate whiche had beene ſlaine in ſacrifice vnto the Idole. They excuſed the fact in this wiſe, that they had knowledge, they vnderſtoode well that the Idole was not GOD, they went not of any deuotion at al, as touching the worſhip and ſeruice whiche the heathen men did vſe, but for friendſhippe and neighbourhood ſake, they woulde not refuſe to eate with ſuche as were their kinsfolkes or acquaintance. Nowe although Saint Paule doth mildlye deale with them, and aunſwereth their reaſons in the 8. and 9. Chapters: yet in the 10. chap. he dealeth very roughly with them, ſetting before them

the terrible example of Gods wrath vpon Idolaters, and sheweth plainlie, that they were partakers of the table of diuelles, and that they dranke of the cup of diuels, how so euer they thought they kept themselues, and their consciences free and vnpolluted. Euen so I conclude, that these worldlings whiche vse this shift, howe little deuotion so euer they haue yet they haue no lesse then the Corinthians had in the Idole feast, therfore, when S. Paule affirmeth, that they committed idolatrie, it must needes follow that these do much more.

Ath. Well, if the matter bee hearde, that it bee an offence, I truste God wyll forgiue vs.

zelot. It is your manner although a sinne be neuer so foule, yet to make small accompte of it, but like a dogge, that is wounded, yee thinke yee can by this meanes lick your selues whole, if yee can but say, I hope GOD will forgiue vs.

Athe. If you say true, then all our forefathers should be condemned, because they did worship images. I doubt not but god was as mercifull vnto them, as hee is vnto men now: I think they pleased god better then wee doe now: let vs not stande so much in our owne light.

Zelot. It is a meruellous thing for to see, how the Diuel doth dazle mens eyes, and how he doth bewitche them. These things which you vtter, and such like, are euen like a vaile before your eyes, so that ye are not able for to haue anye sight into Gods worde. How grosse and doltishe soeuer the matter bee, if yee can say thus, our forefathers did it, wil ye condemne thé, then all is safe enough. But see howe yee are ouerseene, all our forefathers did not fal from GOD by idolatrye, foreuen in the pride of the reigne of Antichrist, there were some stoode vp against him, in diuers countries. There were alwaies some whó God lightened to see the abhominatiós of the man of sin, & so to repent & take hold of Christ: & God who is alwayes like himself receiued them to mercy. And doubtlesse God is more now displeased with such as do nowe wilfully kicke and spurne against the trueth, and seeke for to quench the glorious light of the Gospel, then he was with thé, from whó the word of God was taken away, & being blinde, they were made for to beleeue euery lye, and therefore nowe when GOD offerreth his grace, and seeketh by his word to expel that grosse darknesse, it were good for suche as you, not to stande in your owne

lyght, and obstinately to refuse the knowe-
ledge of GOD. Our forefathers had that
great plague came vpon them, which S. Paule
did foretell. 2. Thess. 2. Namely, that there
shoulde bee a falling away, that Antichriste
should deceiue the worlde, and bring them
to damnation: for GOD (he saith) should
sende them strong delusions, euen for to be-
leeue lies, because they receiued not the loue
of the trueth, that they might be saued: and
nowe when God offereth his worde againe,
men do not ioyfully and thankfully embrace
it, and therefore God doth send them shep-
heardes euen after their heartes desire: not to
feede them (for they cannot) but to fleese the
for that they can skill off: not to be salte for
to season them, but to be euen like dounge
cast vpon them for to corrupte them: not to
giue them light, seeing themselues are blinde.
The greatest number of you are as farre from
God, as they were euen in the blindest time
of Poperye, and that is confessed by your
owne mouth, when yee say yee would fol-
low our forefathers: For ye meane not those
Forefathers which did knowe and worshipp
God aright, but those which were seduced,
and fell from him by idolatry. I am verye
loath for to question with ye any further in

the commaundementes, ye are so exceeding blinde in them. For I knowe that in our land, let all the people be numbred, and fiue partes of ye doe vnderstand so much in the cómandements, Lordsprayer, & articles of the faith, that it were a great shame for a godly man to haue a childe of x. yeeres old for to knowe no more.

Ath. How can ye tell that, I thinke ye goe beyond your booke, haue ye posed all?

Ath. I goe not so far beyonde my booke, as you thinke I doe. And although I haue not posed al, yet I haue posed so many, that I knowe what the state of the moste is. This I finde that in the best and moste religious townes generally, the greatest parte haue very little zeale. This I finde, that where ther is one of these townes which are forwarde, there be fiue which are not, because they want teaching. This further I know by experience, that those which are the willing ones, and as it were the dayly hearers for a long time are very raw when they be examined. The iudge you what is in the rest, whiche are very seldome taught, or refuse for to bee taught. And if this be not true, let me loose my hand. And yet there be idle bellies, which are not ashamed with open mouth to cry

that lesse preaching would serue, & that there is knowledge enough amõg the people: whẽ the poore people do not vnderstand so much as the Lords prayer: vnlesse they would hold them still in popery, they can bee no more ignorant.

Ath. I could like the better, if the preaching might be only vpõ the sabboth day: but now they run in the weeke daies, and leaue their busines, & beggar themselues they go to other townes also, which is a pitie ẏ it is suffered: it is a great disorder zelot. Hee is said to be blessed, which hath his delight in the law of the Lord, and which doth meditate therein day & night: I confesse that the sabboth day is the chiefe time to seeke for knowledge. But that man which hath so litle loue to the word, that he cannot bestow one houre in a weeke for to heare it, and yet can bestowe diuers houres in vaine talking, drinking and gaminge, is but a dull scholler vpon the sabboth daye. I warrant ye, if a man looke well vnto him, he shall finde it hard to iudg whether he or the seat he sate on, caried away most: & for leauing their busines so far as they may conueniently, would yee haue them forget the precept of our sauiour christ, first seeke the kingdom of God, and his righteousnes, & then al these things shalbe cast vpõ

you? The ſoule with you is leſſe to bee cared for, thé the body: ye prefer this life before eternall life: & as for this, that men come for to be beggers by followinge ſermons, that they ſell their kine, & that they are faine to be gathered for in the Churche: ye haue a bowget full of theſe lies, and yee neede but euen a mill for to grinde them. They are taught by the word preched, to follow their labours painfully, & the bleſſing of God is vpon mens labours, whiche doe ſeek him and the knowledge of his word: and although it ſometime doeth hinder them one houre, yet it ſaueth them and gaineth them many houres, whiche they were woont to beſtow vainely.

Ath. I doe not like this ſo euil as the other, when they runne from towne too towne ſo diſorderly.

Zelot. I pray yee tell mee if there were a dearth of corne, how farre woulde ye goe too fetch corne, rather then ſtarue? I beleeue, as farre as the ſonnes of Iacob, when they wente out of the land of Canaan into Egipt.

Ath. I count him a fwle, which wil not goe a greate way off to buy his corne, rather then ſtarue.

Zelot. He is a ſtark foole, which wil not go a great way rather then ſtarue his body: but he is not a fwle which wil not once ſtep out at his

for to seeke the euerlastinge foode of his soule.

Ash. Those are not a like, wee muste needes seeke for to liue.

Zelot. No, you cannot see them for too bee a like: you see well in thinges of this worlde, but for heauenly thinges, yee see no thinge: but to come to the matter, it is greate pittie indeede, that there shoulde be such disorder, as that men shoulde runne from towne to towne to heare sermons: Our Sauiour Christe pitied them when they came into the wilderneese for too heare him, because hee saith, they were as sheepe without a sheepehearde. But you and your mates are not grieued with the same pitie: ye are as like a malicious dogge as can bee, whiche lyeth vppon the haye, and will eate none, neither will suffer the Oxe whiche woulde. Woe bee vnto yee Scribes and Pharisees, yee Hypocrites, ye shut vppe the kingdome of Heauen before men, yee enter not in your selues, neither doo yee suffer those which woulde enter. Mat 23:14.

Ash. You say they goe to seeke foode for their soules, and to learne to knowe God but they doe it of vaineglorie.

Zelot.

Zelot. There bee alwaies some no doubt, whiche doe not seeke of a sincere minde but of vaine glorie, and doe abuse their knowe-ledge, and are vainelie puffed vppe in them-selues, with an opinion of those thinges which are not in them: but will you giue sentence against all, because some are such? Is this a good argument? men giue almes for vaine glorie, men come to the Churche, and praye of vaine glorie: Therefore almes and pray-er are to be left: for doubtlesse some doe those thinges for vaine glorye, euen as our *Sa-uiour Christe* accuseth the Scribes and Pha-risees.

Ath. But Christ bideth vs doe those thinges. How will ye proue that we are commanded to do this?

Zelot. I knowe no place which hath in plaine woordes, Goe vnto other countreis or townes for to heare preachinge, and whie? becaus the will of God is that they shoulde haue Preachers come home vnto them, and bee appointed ouer them for to feede them. I might alleadge examples of good men which sought after Christ, whome he did not forbid. Doe yee thinke when the Lorde com-maundeth vs to seeke him so earnestlie, and that in the mysterie of his Gospell, that a few

myles

rules ought for to stop vs. Howe farre thinke yee men runne for a little earthly substaunce? How farre doe they run on heapes, both men & women, vnto feasts, maygames, dauncings, plaies, bearebaytings, and other such vanities? Ah. Youth will be dooing, ye must not blame them, they haue time enough to be holy hereafter. I haue had a great delight my selfe ere now in those things as one, but now I ware olde.

Zelotes. I was sure yee woulde alowe this kinde of running from towne to towne, this is no disorder at all: howe many are there of yee, which crie out with open mouth, against such as seeke after the woorde, and seeke for to trouble & punish them for so doing, whiche once open your mouth against these foule abuses? Whereas ye saye, youth wil bee dooyng, yee say true, and so will many aged likewise, but doeth it followe therefore that they must be suffered to doe the thinges which are euill? In that yee say, they haue time enough to bee holy heereafter, therein you shew your selfe to be a right worldling, a very Epicure, an ignoraunt man: for thus your worldly Epicures doo speake, youthe will haue their face, let them alone, what should younge men and maidens doe with the Scriptures? cleancontrary

trary vnto that which God speaketh by his Prophet. Wherwithall shall a young man clense his way? euen by taking heede thereto according to thy woorde. Likewise by Salomon in the booke of Ecclesiastes chap. 11. Remember thy creator in the dayes of thy youth. But now adaies it is a principal point of diuinitie, that youth may walke after the lusts of the flesh, so long vntill through custome of sinning, they are so besotted & hardened in their wicked lusts, & their concupiscences are grown so strong, that ther can no grace enter into them, & so it seemeth for to be with you, for I dare warrant, you are able to tell a long tale of your youth trickes.

Ah. Well, I am as I am, you cannot make me better, & I trust ye shall make me no worse. Ye speake as though none could be good but scripture men.

Zelot. None can bee good but such as feare GOD, such as seeke for to obey him: None feare God, which set light by his ordinances and cast them behinde their backes: None can obey God, but such as do seeke for to knowe and followe those preceptes whiche hee setteth in his woorde. None are godly, but suche as are clensed, and guide their wayes by the woorde. Hee which is

of

of God heareth Gods word.

Ath. If they be so good and godly, how commeth it to passe then, that there is so much debate among them? For I know townes my self, which are euen deuided one part against another, since they had a preacher, which were not so before. This they gain, that whereas before they loued together, now ther is dissention folwed among them.

zelot. Now ye discharge your greatest ordinance: I now ye haue now paide it hote: It is harde if Satan cannot with this engine ouerthrow and beate down preaching. But I pray you tel me, can ye put fire and water together but they will rumble? Will ye haue light and darknesse for to agree as companions together?

Ath. What is this to the matter?

zelot. Would ye haue God and the Diuell agree together? would ye haue the godly and the wicked for to bee at one? this ye must do, ye looke where the fault is to be layde.

Ath. I thinke the fault must néeds be layde vppon the preaching, because they agréed before that came.

zelot. If

zelot. If their agreement together before had beene good, then no doubt the preaching that should breake it, could not be good for one good thing cannot destroy another. But the former peace was not in GOD, but in the flesh: neyther was it so great as you would seeme for to set it forth, because that the worldelinges are alwayes at strife, and one readie for to cutte anothers throat: but yet their hatred is so exceeding great against the Gospel, that in respect of the mind, which they carrye towardes the professours therof, they seeme among themselues to be at peace, and one to loue and make much of another.

Ath. Where is the fault then so, to be layd?

zelot. Vppon the wicked which fret and rage against the word, because it layeth open and discloseth their filthinesse, and bewrayeth them. For the light (as S. Paule saith) doth manifest all things. They pretende other excuses, as though they hated the professours for some euill conditions: but this is very euident, a blind man may almoste discerne it, that so long as a man is voyd of religion, he makeeth profession of no more then they, so long: although hee be full, and swarme with great

great vices, hee is an honest man, but let him follow the word, and be carefull for to amend, then there is not a lewder felow vpon earth, diuers slaunders shall be rayſed, things shall be reckoned vp, which he did ſeuen yeeres agone: and now they hate him like a dogge. Light is come into the world, and men loue darkenesse more then light, becauſe their works be euill. Will ye charge Christ and his Goſpel, becauſe as he ſaieth, hee came not to ſend peace, but a ſwoorde, to ſet the father against the ſonne? Math. 10. Or will ye lay the blame vpō thoſe which loue the light? Wil ye blame S. Paul and his preaching becauſe ther was ſtirre and hurly burly almoſt wherſoeuer he came? Was he to be blamed, or the wicked infidels, which could not abide to haue their ſinnes reprooued?

Ath. There be ſome places where they haue graue & learned preachers, and yet there is no ſuch contention in their parishes: I like that well.

zelot. You like that well: ſo doth your maiſter alſo.

Ath. What meane you by that? whome doe ye call my maiſter?

zelot. Euen the Diuell, for he is con-

tent thoſe Preachers ſhoulde ride vppon his backe, becaute hee is ſure they will not ſpure gall him: they bee verie gentle riders. Doe yee not thinke, that if they ſhoulde ſet foorth Gods woorde as they ought, and ſpreade the light: that all wicked men (of whiche their pariſhe are full) woulde ſtorme and fret againſt them: the Diuell him ſelfe woulde fiske about, if they ſhoulde ſpurre him but a little. But they can tell a ſmoothe tale in the pulpit, garniſhed with ſome merry ſtory, for to make the people merrie, or els ſome olde rotten allegorie: or ſome farre fetched matter out of ſome great writers, that the people may be at their wits ende, and admit them. A man woulde thinke too ſee the people come out of the Churche blowing, that they were fedde as full as tickes: when they go home with emptie bellies. This I dare warrant, if it bee not ſo let me loſe both mine eares, that goe thorow the pariſhes of theſe graue and learned diuines, and except ſuche as runne to fetche their victuals other where, yee ſhall not finde fiue among fiue ſcore whiche are able to vnderſtande the neceſſarie groundes and principles of religion: and yet the people wyll ſaye they bee excellent deepe men: But I doute not thoſe Welles whiche are ſo deepe

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that a man can drawe no water out of them.

Ath. I see you like better of yong rash heades & troublesome fellowes, then ye do of graue stayed men: for nowe a dayes there are a number which take vpon the to preach, which indeede doe but prattle, & for my part, I will beleeue none of them: but I will rather giue credit to ỹ whiche ancient learned men do speake.

Zelot. I doe vtterlie mislike that any rash head shoulde haue the office of preachinge, whiche is a thing of so great dignitie, as to be the mouth of GOD vnto the people, to vtter the counsels and misteries of the Lorde, and to teache them the way to saluation: and greate dishonour to GOD and his Gospell it is, if there be many suche, as you say there bee: but if they bee godly, learned, graue, discrete, and wise, and doe faithfullye and zelouslye dispose the manifolde mysteries of GOD, the the matter is not whether they bee younge or olde: for the doctrine whiche they doe teache and expounde, is not their owne, but the doctrine of Christe, the authoritie is not of them, but of GOD, whiche hath giuen it. But I knowe your meaninge: you count all those to be ignoraunt, and to prattle, which

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do not preach according vnto your humours, such as do sharply inueigh against your vanities: and those which do not, they be learned and graue men, let vs beleeue them: and so ye look not what God saith, but what men say: & surelye those kind of graue men do great hurt: I meane such as carie a great shewe of learning in them, and scarse any are the better for it.

Ath. And surely I think they do much good.

zelot. You thinke they do much good, but I know they do very much hurt: the blind and vnlearned ministers are hurtfull, those which are popish priests do hurt, they which follow euill vices, as drunken ministers, swearers, quarelers, adulterers, gamsters, and suche like doe hurte, but yet those which you speake of, do more hurt: I will tell you how, where there is such an one as those aboue named, the people haue no great opinió of them, for they can easily say, alas our minister is not able nor meete for to teach vs, and so they are willing to hear & to be informed by others: but those which haue one of your profounde Clearkes, the people so muche hang vpon him, that they will heare none other: This

they say, our Preacher is as profounde a man as any of them all: if we were out of the way, he would tel vs, if so much teaching were needefull, would not he teache vs? If such things were euil, would he vse them? And so they conclude, that they care not for learninge ought saying as his mouth, when as in deede he teacheth them litle or nothing, peraduenture he giueth them a colde collation once a month and when a man shall take the proofe of them, hee shall finde that they are no better then such as haue a dumbe Idoll to their shephard.

Ad. Is it not better for to haue a sermon now and then, to haue it a learned sermon: then for to haue many, without learning? I think one such sermon doth more good then an hundreth of these flying sermons.

Zelot. I graunt thus much, that the worde of GOD is to bee handled with great care, men are not to steppe foorthe and to speake rashlye, and without sure and vndoubted knowledge of the thinges whiche they vtter. Moreouer, there ought to be such learning and discretion, as shall bee sufficient to open and to manifest the power and dignitie of the worde vnto the consciences of the hearers, hee must bee able for to make plaine

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the sense of the scriptures, and he must applye it to the hearers which dooth preache. For to handle the holy misteries of God vnskilfully is a vice greatly to be condemned, & I thinke suche, although they preache neuer so often, shall doe but little good. I pray you let mee know which you count a learned sermon: & which ye call a flying sermon?

Ath. That is a learned sermon, when the Preacher doeth lay open the matter learnedly.

Zelot. You meane when he is able too speake much Latine, and to alleadge all sorts of writers?

Ath. I count those learned fellowes indeede, I will not giue a button for those englishe Doctors, whiche can alleadge no more but out of Paul and Peter.

Zelot. It woulde bee a notable learned sermon then, if the Preacher shoulde speake all latine.

Ath. Then wee whiche doe not vnderstande latine should be neuer the better.

Zelot. If so little coulde pleasure you, then no doubt a whole Sermon would edifie you muche. But such vaine men as you

doe shewe your vanitie, when yee looke more after those thinges which should feede your eares, then for to haue your soules conuerted. Is that to be vsed whiche cannot edifie at all, but serueth for a vaine shewe, and disturbeth the minde and memorie of the diligent hearer? But let this goe, and let vs see the other, for alleadging of writers, in this matter yee haue sundrie graue men of your side, which counte those Sermons learned, whiche are set foorth with all sortes of authorities, and those which bring the bare worde out of the Bible, they make but vnlearned Sermons. But doubtlesse they may shewe some grauitie in their beard, for there is none in the matter.

Ath. Are they not thereby knowne for to be learned men, euerye Plowman nowe a dayes can alleadge out of Saint Paule?

zelot. They are thereby knowne for to bee vnskilful men, and suche as are not rightlye instructed in the doctrine of S. Paule. They make a great shew of learninge and yet want the knowledge of the dignitie of Gods word. When as they bring in the sayinges of Plato, and Aristotle, as fellowes and companions with the oracles of God vttered by his Prophetes

pheres and Apostles, and as though there were greater and deeper matter in those, then in the Bible, whereas all the heauenly mysteries and counsels of God are vttered, they stick not to count that vnlearned whiche is brought from thence: and greate learninge to bee in the sayinges of the other. For this cause they doe also seeke for to garnilhe their sermons, and as it were for to set them with Pearle, when as in effect they doe nothinge els, but as if a man shoulde mingle Leade with pure golde, and claye with precious oyle. And because ye speake of learning, tell mee what ye e thinke, whether Saint Augustine or Saint Paule, was the better learned,

Ach. You shoulo aske that question of such as are learned: would yee haue mee tell yee?

Zelot. Is not hee whiche doeth alleadge sentences out of Augustine, Ambrose, Hierome, and Cyprian, better learned then they whiche alleadge out of Moses, Esaye, Peter Paule, or Iohn?

Ach. I tolo yee before that euery man can alleadge out of these, e if I could read e haue a Bible, I coulve doe it also: but to alleadge out of the other, none can do that

but such as are great Clarkes.

Zelot. Then it seemeth that they were better then Paule and Peter, or Moses, or els why shoulde they bee esteemed to be better learned which doe cite them?

Ath. If I might shote my bolt, I think they were the learneder, because their writings are so profounde.

zelot. I woulde you did think so alone, but indeede the people haue beene so deluded with such as woulde make a shew of learnynge, that multitudes are of your minde, whiche bringeth in a vile and shamful abassing of the most holy and sacred Bible. But let mee aske yee certaine questions. Doe yee not thinke that if the writinges of those men were to be redde in our tongue, that euerie man then coulde bee able to alleadge out of them, as they doe out of the Bible?

Ath. I thinke they might then be able.

zelot. Doe yee suppose those should by and by bee esteemed for to be learned, whiche doe then alleadge sayinges out of them?

Ath. I see no cause why they should not be counted so.

Zelot. Is he learned in the Bible, whiche can alleadge many sentences?

Ath. A man may speake much & know little.

Zelot. You might see likewise that men may alleadge sayinges out of great Doctors, and yet themselues bee great Dawes: for hee is learned whom God doth teache for to vnderstande the heauenly mysteries vttered by the Prophetes and Apostles: and in vttering them, doth follow the stepppes of Paule and the rest. The Doctours had all their true learning out of the Byble: for in it is sette foorth that wisdome whiche is aboue all.

Ath. The scriptures are darke & hard, and therefore men we not nowe vnderstande them as the Doctors did. And for this cause, I haue heard preachers say, they are to be vouched.

Zelot. Those Preachers might haue bin wiser, then for to maintaine two so grosse opinions. The first, accusing the Scriptures of such darkenesse, as though they couldo not bee vnderstoode, whereas in deede the principall and moste necessary poyntes, the Lorde hath spoken so clearly, that very simple men maye bee taught for to see the

plaine euidence of the worde. The other deprieth the Churche of the true interpreter of the worde, which is the spirite of God, as though the Lord did not now giue such gifts as he gaue to those Doctours: which is a popish opinion also: for so long as God giueth his word to the Churche, so long he giueth the interpreter of the same, although not in all ages alike: but whosoeuer is not blinde, maye easily see, that in this age there bee as great giftes bestowed vpon the Churche, as euer were in any, since the time of the Apostles.

Ath. Then you are one of those which deface the old Fathers, when ye will not allowe them for to bee cited in the Sermons. To what vse the should men read them?

Nest. This is a verye false accusation: shoulde a man bee accused for defacing the honour of the Lorde Chauncellour, because he would denie him the dignitie and honour of the prince? Likewise shall a man bee sayde for to iniurie or deface the Doctours, because he will not giue them the dignitie which doeth belong vnto GOD alone? The preacher is the mouth of GOD vnto the people, and not the mouth of men: hee is not for

better doubtful matter and vncerteine, but such as may be most euident. He must say, and proone euen vnto the conscience of the hearer, thus God speaketh, and thus he meaneth. He cānot say Augustin saith it, therfore God saith it; Augustine saith it, therfore it is vndoubtedly true: for Augustine might and did erre many wayes. But he may say, Saint Paule saith it, therefore GOD himselfe saith it. S. Paul saith it, therfore it is vndoubtedly true: for look what he saith, or any other Apostle, Euangelist or Prophet, God hath set it downe by them, it is his, and not theirs: they are but the instruments which he vsed for to vtter and penne his will, his spirite in them ruled the whole in this case, so that they did not, nor could not erre: now when the preacher doth lay open their saying, not hee, nor they, but GOD speaketh: as they were the mouth of God for to set it down, so is he now againe the mouth of God, for to recite and declare it.

Ath. The word of God is certaine and sure, because God cānot lie, but how shal I know which is the true sense of it? shal I beleeue euery mā which doth interprete the word? shal I not ꝯ better beleeue him

if he saye it is not my interpretation, but S. Ierome he saith so. S. Augustine he saith so, I promise ye, he shal haue the greater credit with me, for they were other manner of men then ye.

Zelot. I cannot but marueil to see howe grosse and dull your head is for to learne the truth, and how readily you can bringe out suche matters as this: ye speake not of your owne head. I would there were no greater learned men then you blinded in this matter. But let mee shewe yee your grosse error. Yee say the word is certaine and sure: but the interpretation thereof yee make doubtfull: but what are wee the better that the word of God is sure and certaine, vnlesse it be sure & certaine vnto vs, whiche cannot bee except the interpretation be so? It is as good for you to say the word is doubtfull, as for to say the sense is doubtfull: Nowe when as yee bring the sense vppon men, can yee denie but that still it is in doubt? This must needes arise in the minde, those Doctors sayd so, but they might erre, and therefore I am not certaine that this is the sense. If this shal bee admitted in the Churche, what shal become of that ἀσφάλεια, or full certainte of faith, which the woorde of GOD doeth require

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to be in vs, it is grounded vpon the worde of God, for it cannot stand otherwise.

Moreouer, faith is sure what God meaneth, or els it is no faith: therefore such as woulde hange mens faith vppon the authoritie of men, where they must needes still be in doubt, and when they are at the furthest, they come but vnto this, it is very like for to bee true, because such notable men speake it, doe not know a right what faith is, for that yee say, hee shal haue the more credit with you, if hee saye, It is not my sayinge, but the saying of Augustine: therein ye were euen as good say, that your faith is built vppon men, and not vpon God. For if yee doe beleeue because some greate learned or Godlye man telleth yee the matter, this is no true beleefe, for, wee must bee fullye perswaded that God himselfe dooth tell vs, or els wee bee neuer the neare.

Ech. How shal I know when God speaketh, or which God speaketh? you come and preach one way, another commeth & he doth preach another way, yee preache one contrary to another: you say god speaketh, he saith God speaketh, whiche shall we beleeue? Is not he to be best beleeued which can shew that those great Doctors

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are one byis fyde.

Zelot. See what a grounde you learne vnto, you knowe not when GOD speaketh, nor what God speaketh: and therefore yee wyll haue some of the olde Doctors for to tell: are yee sure hee telleth yee right? if yee be, it is because hee sheweth yee the word of God, why hee telleth yee so, the credit must bee giuen vnto the word, and not to the man. But you saie yee can not tell when one dooth alleadge the woord in the true meaning, howe then, can ye tell when one alleadgeth the Doctor in the true meanyng? he which will falsifie the word of God in the Bible, he will not sticke for to falsifie the meaninge of the Doctor. you may searche the Scriptures, to see whether the Testimonies alleadged be so, as the men of Berea did, when Paule preached. Acts. 17. 11. You cannot, neither are ye commaunded for to searche the Doctors. And vnlesse yee see the manifest authoritie of gods worde, yee are not bounde for to beleeue, but if it be plainlye shewed, that God hath spoken, then yee are bounde vnder the paine of dampation, for too giue credite vnto it. Christe sayth: My sheepe heare my voice, a Stranger they will not heare. Iohn 10. Also S. Iohn saieth, Brethren, beleeue not euerie

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spirite, but trie the spirites, whether they bee of God, 1. Iohn 4. he therefore whiche saieth, I cannot tell when the voyce of Christe is vttered, it is all one as if hee should say, I am none of the sheepe of Christe, because (as hee saieth) Euery one of his sheepe doe know his voice. He that saith, I know not which Preacher doth preache truth, and which falshood, he may euen as well saye, I am none of those, to whome the holye Ghoste speaketh, and sayeth: Trie the spirites whether they be of God, it is a generall precept giuen vnto all Christians.

Ath. Ye shall neuer make me beleeue that euery man is for to iudge, whether ye Preacher speake true or false.

Zelot. I know not what I shall beeable for to make you beleeue, but I am sure I can plainelye shewe what yee ought to beleeue. First, marke this, the woorde came not from man, neither canne a man teache it yee, vnlesse God reueale it by his spirit: if it were the wisdome of the worlde, or of the flesshe, then the spirite of the worlde whiche is in man and knoweth the secretes of man, coulde teache it: but because it is the misterie of GOD, none can make yee learne it, but the holye Ghoste, whiche searcheth euen the deepe

thinges of God, as S. Paul teacheth 1. Cor. 2. 20. S. Iohn in his first Epistle, Cap. the second, hauing tolde them that there were euen then many Antichrists, he comforteth them with this: You saith he, haue receiued an anointing from the holy one, & know al things. Like as therefore none of those can learne who God doeth not inlighten with his spirit: so on the cõtrary part all those which are taught within by the spirit, doe feele when the doctrine which the same spirit hath taught, is vttered: he knoweth his owne, and he sealeth it vp in their hearts and consciences, which being instructed by him, must needes consent thereto fully. For this cause there is greate difference betweene such as set all vpon the authorities of men and such as preach, as S. Paule saith he did with the plaine euidence of the spirit, & of power, 1. Cor. 24. he addeth the reason in the next verse, that their faith should not consist in the wisedome of men, but in the power of God. If faith may not hange vpon the wisdome of menne, and therefore the intising speeche which mans wisdome teacheth, is to be auoyded in settinge foorthe the Gospell, then can it not stand vpon the authorities of men.

Ath. Is it not lawful in any respect for

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to alleadge them.

Zelot. Yes, no doubt there are circumstances, which may make it sometime verye needefull. I speake only against this, that they are alledged when as we may alledge the same thinges out of the word it selfe. And when they are alleadged, for men to builde their faith vpon, or to make men thinke that there can be no certaintie in the interpretation of the worde, but where as they are made for to speake: When as in deede the Preacher in his Sermon must come with suche euidence and make his proofe so plaine and so strong, that it must needes conuince the conscience of the hearers, in such wise that of necessitie he shall be forced for to say, vndoubtedly that whiche this man vttereth, is that which God himselfe speaketh: for so saith the Apostle 1. Cor. 14. 24 If, saith he, all do prophesie, and there come in an infidel, or one vnlearned, he is reproued of all, he is iudged of all: and so the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and fallinge vpon his face, he will worship God, confessinge that God is verely among you. This testimonie doth shew that the force of Gods woorde vttered nakedly is such, that it conuicteth the hart of the infidel, and compelleth him for to confesse that God is with thē which speak it

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The worde of God is described in the Epistle to the Hebrewes Chap. 4. 12. after this sorte: the word of God (saith he) is liuely & mightie in operation, sharper then any two edged sworde, and entreth in vnto the deuiding a sunder of the soule and the spirite, of the ioynts and the marow, and is a discerner of the thoughtes and intents of the hart. Men might vnderstand by this, that by whomsoeuer this sword of the spirite be drawn foorth, if it be rightly handled, it will pearse through, and through both the bodies & soules of the hearers, & wil moue euery vaine in the hart, eue of the wicked. So that he needeth not for to grinde it, or make it sharpe vpon the grindstone of Ambrose or Hierom.

Ath. Then you destroy learning, if ye take away the writinges of the Doctors, for they serue to no vse: if it be as you say, why should students read them?

Relet. There is great benefit in the reading of them, for to help vs to the true vnderstanding of the scriptures.

Ach. If they helpe ye to vnderstand the scriptures, wherfore do ye not whē ye expound the scriptures, tel which is theirs? Ye rob them, and take the glory to your selues

selues.

Zelot. Nowe yee reason as bussardlike as can be, yee may be a Doctour of Dunces, for this argument. Doeth the Preacher come in his owne name? must hee tell his owne wil, or is hee to seeke his owne glorie, or the glory of any other man? If other haue holpen him to finde the knowledge of GODS will, which he must vtter, it is therefore becomne theirs, because they haue shewed it vnto him. If he nowe set it foorth in the name of the Lorde alone, whose it is, doth he robbe them? For looke whatsoeuer a man findeth in the auntient writers in expounding, hee is no further to beleeue them then they proue their exposition out of the Bible. so that it continueth still not theirs but the Lordes: and if wee shoulde ascribe it vnto them, wee shoulde robbe the Lorde, and be theeues for other men. Therfore in this matter, we muste follow the precept whiche the Lorde giueth. 1. Peter. 4. 11. He that speaketh let him speake as the wordes of God.

Ath. Is that so meant, that it is not alowed to cite ani thing out of other bookes besides the worde?

zelot. I tolde yee before that it is not simplye vnlawfull for to cite or alleadge a sentence out of a Doctour. But the maner and ende of the dooing of it is alls I say likewise that a man may in some sorte alleadge a saying out of any Heathen or prophane Writer: for we haue the example of Saint Paule Actes 17. 1. Corinth. 15. Titus 3. Alleadging the sayings of prophane Poets. But we must see to what end: doth he reason thus, the Poet saieth it, therefore are yee to giue credit vnto it: no man would be so foolish as to make their woordes being heathen men, to be of such authoritie: but hee sheweth that euen their owne Doctors consented with him in those thinges. And therefor a shame, and foule reproche for them to be ignoraunt of the same. When the papistes doe charge vs to be gone from the faithe of the olde fathers, although we are to confute them this waye, namelye, by shewinge their treacherie and lyinge, when wee are able to prooue by the writinges of the auncient Fathers that in the chiefe pointes they fullye agree with vs: yet this is not the way which God hath appointed and sanctified for the

conuersion and education of his people: this engine is ouer weake to reare vppe the Temple of the Lorde: wee muſt take heede we leaue not the mightie worde it ſelfe, and leane vnto a totteringe piller: Saint Paule ſheweth the power of the worde 2. Corinth. 10. where hee ſaith, although wee walke in the fleſhe, yet wee warre not after the fleſhe: for the weapons of our warrefare are not carnall, but mightie in God for to throwe downe holdes: whiche he expounꝺeth in the verſe which followeth, to be the imaginations and euerie high thing which is exalted againſt the knowledge of God, and euery thought, whiche (hee ſaith) they leade captiue vnto the obedience of Chriſt. There is no power nor any authoritie can doe theſe thinges but that which is in the worde of God it ſelfe. Which is to bee made ſo euident by the Preacher, that it may bringe this thing to paſſe.

The miſerable experience in our time of ſuche as flye from the ſtronge power of the woorde, and fighte with the weapons of menne, maye teache vs, becauſe it doeth manyfeſtlye appeare vnto all whiche haue eyes too ſee, that they are not

strong enough to throwe downe holdes and to leade captiue vnto the obedience of Christ the rebellious thoughtes and imaginations of mens mindes: they cannot shew a man by them conuerted sincerely and throughly from errours and euill manners: by alleadging the authorities of men. It was not the practise of the auncient and godlye fathers in their Sermons for too, haue the testimonies of the mightie word, which is able to rent the stony rocke in peeces, and to cleaue the authorities of weak men, which were gone before them. But what should a man say? The woorde is thought too bee of no power vnlesse it bee strengthned otherwise.

But let vs leaue this and come backe againe to some of your other matters. I remember yee did lay this as a great accusation against the preachers that they meddled with predestination.

Ath. I did so & not without cause, for they doe great hurte thereby vnto many, when they teach such things.

Zelot. What hurte can yee shewe, which commeth by preaching of predestination.

Ath.

Ash. If a man be chosen for to bee saued, let him do as euil as he can he shal not be damned: & if a man be appointed before he was borne to be damned, let him do neuer so much good he cannot be saued & therefore when yée teach this doctrine, ye were euen as good tel ỳ people ỳ they may liue as they list. Let them neuer heare teaching, to what purpose should it serue?

zelotes. Howe proude and presumptuously bolde ignoraunce doth make a man? It might seeme to bee a rare thinge that a mortall man, whiche is but claye and dust, yea a rotten Carion, should aduaunce him selfe against God, euen the Lorde of infinite wisedome and glorie, but that wee see it dayly for to be common.

Ash. Do not accuse me for to be proud, I would I were as free fro al other faults if it pleased God.

zelot. If yee were as sick, as ye be proude, a verie liedemeate woulde giue yee your supper. But I knowe you doe not see your pride.

Ash. I maruel why ye should count me proud, ye see how plaine I goe.

zelot. You thinke that pride is the

coate, when his in the hearte, a manne may haue a Kinges hearte in his breaſt, and yet a beggers coate vppon his backe. There is cauſe why yee doe not goe gaye, yee are not able: for take the raggeddeſt begger in the worlde, and giue her the ſame winge whiche the great Ladies haue, and yee ſhall ſee her flye the ſame flighte. There is pride againſt GOD, and againſte men, and you are in the deepeſt of them, euen againſte God.

4th. I woulde that, becauſe ye condemne me ſoſoze.

zelot. Yee take your ſelfe for to bee wiſe, and the Lorde vndiſcreete and vnwiſe. For yee charge him with follye when as yee ſaie his doctrine doeth ouerthrowe all, and yet hee hath expreſſed it in ſundrie places of his woorde. If his bee ſo exceeding hurtfull, then ſurely Chriſt was to be blamed, Saint Paule, and Saint Peter with the reſte of the Apoſtles were vnie vndiſcreete, becauſe they haue ſet it foorth. It ſeemeth that it had beene good for them to haue taken aduiſe of the deepe heades of the worlde, whiche might haue foretolde them the daunger whiche woulde followe, and haue

saide, Maisters take heede howe yee deale with suche doctrine, it will turne yee vnto discredit. O foolish wise flesh, this matter is ouer far beyond thy reache, thou canst neuer come within the smell of it.

Ath. Smell, or smell not, let me heare yee answer the matter.

Zelot. You suppose that your reasons are vnanswerable, and that causeth yee too bee so fresh and readye, but alas man, your halfepeniesis no good syluer, yee are in a wrong boxe, I will shewe you howe childish ly yee erre.

Forsooth say you, if God hath chosen a man to saluation before hee was borne, then let him doe as euill as he can, he shall not bee damned: and whereas the nature of man is prone and readye to seeke after the liberue of the flesh, this dooth open a doore vnto him, and a wide passage vnto all euill, because he needeth not to care what he doth it is appointed before hande what shall be-come of him.

This mightie and inuincible reason of yours hath neuer an eye to see with all, and although it seeme for to haue good legges

yet is it but an olde Cripple: bee not led by it for yee shall both fall into the ditch. Dyd yee neuer heare what S. Paule saieth, Ephesians Chapter 1. 4. these are his woordes, as he hath chosen vs in him, before the foundations of the worlde were layde, that wee should bee holy and without blame before him throughe loue. Howe stande these two thinges together, when you say, if men bee chosen they may liue as they lust, and GOD saieth by his Apostle, that hee hath chosen them for to bee holye and blamelesse in their conuersation. And this is vndoubtedly true, that those whom God hath predestinate to bee heires of glorie, hee hath sealed them with the holye spirite, as yee maye reade in the same Chapter. They are freed from the bondage of sinne by the spirite, they walke in the spirite, they are led by the spirite, they shewe forth by the fruites of the spirite, that the flesshe with the lustes and concupiscences thereof is crucified in them, and that they are regenerate and borne againe of the spirite, and so become newe creatures in Christe, sinne is abhominable vnto them, they hate it lothsit, no lesse then deadly poison, they pant and breath too

bee

be wholy set free from the remnaunte of it. Righteousnesse his deare and precious vnto them, their ioye and hartes delight is in it. They sighe and grone, because they can not reache vnto the perfection of it. The worde of God dooth plainlye teache, that the electe are thus as I haue shewed: and yet men say that election taketh away all care of Godlye life.

Ath. I like not this, that men wil say they know God hath chosen the: how can they tell can any man tel what God wil do with him: bid God euer tel them, that they are elected?

Zelot. Howe shoulde you like of this, when as ye like of no goodnesse? How shoulde you which are but a natural man, iudge of thinges spirituall? You thinke a man can not tell what GOD will doe with him: because you are blinde and see not the way: ye suppose all other are so: you are an Infidell, or els ye might plainly heare GOD speake in his woorde: and tell which shall be saued, and whiche are in the way to damnation. Doe ye suppose that it is vncertayne when the scripture telleth a man howe he shall knowe that he is chosen, if the woorde

of God tell him he is chosen, hath not GOD himselfe then tolde him? Read the first chapter of the seconde Epistle of Peter, and there yee shall see how a man shall know certainly that hee is elected, and that hee shall neuer fall. For if a man feele that GOD teacheth him by his spirite, and reneweth him by repentaunce, he is sure (because God saith so) that he is chosen to eternall life: if at any time hee feele the grace of GOD weake in him, then doeth hee doubt and stagger, but yet his fayth getteth the vpper hande. On the other syde, when a man liueth in sinne, and obeyeth vnrighteousnesse, God telleth him plainely that he is in the way to damnation. And therefore all those which do not finde in them selues the spirituall birthe at the least begunne whereby they may assure them selues that they be chosens may certainly say, that as yet their state is damnable.

Ath. How can ye say their state is damnable, so long as they beleeue? Can men do more then beleeue?

Vales. They doe not beleeue: for if they beleeue, then are they sure that GOD loueth them: what is it els which they beleeue? if they knowe they be in fauour with God, it is because he chose them in Christ.

If

If they doubt of Gods fauour then do they doubt whether God heareth their prayers, & therfore they shall not receiue any thinge at the handes of GOD, as yee may learne in the Epistle of Saint Iames, Chapter 1. verse 6.7. and although manie of the faithfull doe doubt & stagger oftentimes, yet they are not like the vnfaithful which cõtinue in the same, but they get the vpper hande, they striue by praier, & by al other meanes which god hath appointed, to strengthen and increase their faith, their knowledge, their repentaunce, and so farre to growe in grace, vntil they come to assurance that God hath chosen them. As for the wicked they know of no such faith, that a man may attaine to assurance of his election: they labour not about any suche matter, but continue still in their blinde doubtes, setting all vpon hazzard: and as for their doing what they can, it is nothing, they cannot but sinne, and therefore bee damned, howsoeuer they seeme for to doo good workes, yet before god they are no good workes, because they proceede not of faith, but from the flesh: they are not graffed into the true vine, Christ, and for that cause can bring forth no fruite. Iohn. 15.

Ath. If God had chosen men before the worlde to bee saued, wherefore did

Christ

Christ die for to saue the: If they should be saued before, his death was more then needed. Wherefore should men be taught, wherefore should they pray? al these are in vaine.

zelot. You are like vnto a man whiche doeth make strife and debate betweene brethren and friendes: you woulde set prayer and teaching, and the death of Christe, together by the eares with Gods election: but doe what yee can, all these will agree well together, they bee so vnseparably knit in friendship. God hath chosen men for to bee redeemed in his sonne. For the scripture sheweth that we are chosen in Christ. He hath chosen men to bee instructed and called by preaching the woord, he hath chosen men for to call vpon him and to worshippe him, in holynesse and righteousnesse, all the daies of their life.

Ath. Ye speake much of preaching, preaching as though it were so needfull: Can they make the woord of God better then it is? Is there not enough set downe in the Bible for men to read, wherefore should they haue more? Can not men read that? Is not reading preaching?

zelot. Nowyee seeke new starting holes.

There

There is some Colt so wilde, that he wil trou ble halfe a dosen light men of foote for too driue him: hee will in at euery gappe, turne at euery lane, and out at euerie gate. Euen so I can liken the reasoning with such as you are: yee haue so many by shifts, so many ca uilles, so many turninges, that ten of the best learned in this lande, shall hardly bee able to keepe ye in the way. But we must not leaue yee thus but bringe yee into the way againe. Preaching is not so needefull, they can make the word of God no better then it is: why man they doe not preache for to make the woorde better, but for to make you better. There is enough sette downe in the Bible, but you vnderstand little enough of it. Men may reade it, as a great number doe whiche peruert it, and are nothing bettered by it, be cause they seeke not helpe for to vnderstande it. Reading say you is preaching. Truly then I knowe a man whiche hath a little daughter that is a trimme Preacher. I perceiue our lande is full of preachers: but yet in deede not such as Saint Paule describeth. For the litle girle is not apt to teach, able to instruct, to exhort, to conuince, nor to deuide, or cut the woorde of God arighte, nor to open the Mysteries of it. If yee leape ouer many of

these

these ditches, yee will breake your necke in the ende: ye are a very skilfull man, when yee take expounding and applying the worde of God, for to be adding: for ye aske why they should adde.

Ath. Are not men allowed whiche are but readers, euen by the learnedst in the land? Do ye finde fault with ỹ Bishops? or are ye one of those which do not allow of Bishops: for suche fellowes there bee now a dayes.

Zelot. I woulde ye shoulde know that I am none of those which disalow Bishops: when as the word of God doth set it downe to be a worthy worke: it is a very reuerende office, & exceedingly they are to be blamed, which doe contemn it, or deface it. God hath ordeined the office of Bishops in his Church, for to gouerne and feede his people: suche as would abolish this ordinance of God, doe resist God, and are enimies vnto the church of Christ.

Ath. By my faith, I like ye the better for that.

Zelot. I like you neuer the better for your swearing.

Ath. I am not so precise as to make any

any account of (swearing by my faith.

Zelot. I thinke so, for faith is no more made account of, then as a packhorse, all is laide on his back.

Ath. I pray God we may do no worse, and then I hope we shal do well enough: are you without sin? I doubt not but ye wil commit as great offence to God as this, or euer ye weeke be ended. Pul the beame out of your owne eye: If euery man would loke to himself, there should not be so much findinge faulte one with an other.

Zelot. Where learne ye that prayer in the scripeure? The Prophet Dauid, Psalme 19. prayeth to bee cleansed from his secrete sinnes, although they bee neuer so small. Where learned yee to speake after this sorte, no woorse, and that yee hope then to doe well enough? Is it nothinge to breake so straight a rule of Christ? Doe ye not thinke that children dying in their infancie, before they can speake or woorke are damned for lesse sins. I speake of such as are not of Gods Church. When as they haue onely originall sin. You know not from how euil a roote this sinne doth spring: nether doe yee knowe the

foule-

foulnesse of sinne, and therefore yee cannot tell how much God doth abhorre it, & condemne it. For this cause, beinge as full of filthy vices and prophane sinnes as ye can be thrust, and of such indeede as God doeth curse and hate: because they seeme small vnto you, ye suppose ye shal do wel ynough, what if I haue greater in me or that I shall cómit greater as you say before the weeke be ended, doth that excuse you? I haue many secret sinnes in me, which I do not see because I doe not perfectly vnderstād the law of God: for these I do earnestly intreat the Lord to make them knowne vnto me, by giuinge mee more perfect vnderstanding of his will, and also to giue mee power for to cast them out. I haue also many sinnes in mee whiche I see and knowe, that cleaue so fast, that I cannot vtterlye cast them foorth: notwithstanding I hate and abhorre them, I am wearie of them, I fighte against them, I grone and sigh in my harte with sorowe for them, I feele no sweetnesse in them; for they are more bitter then Gall vnto my soule. I am exceedinge glad when I can suppresse them, I haue professed and vowed a continuall warre against them, and although I preuaile not so farre as to bee vtterlye ridde

of

Ach. I like not when men will speak
euill of an other mans eye.

Our Sauiour Christ doeth not forbidde to speake euil of an other mans euill deedes, for we are commanded to admonish one another, whensoeuer we see wherein they do offend: but such as you, which can not abyde to be admonished, do euen acknowledge your sayings of Christ, as though they had spoken it vnto this ende, that one should not admonish another. It is a foule hypocrisie for a man to be curious in preaching small faultes in others, and blinde

no lesse science of great and foule vices in his
selfe. Every man ought to looke vnto himselfe,
and euery man is bound by the word of God by
all charitie to looke vnto others, and to keepe I
mean them from their sinnes if they can, and to
vse a sinner from going astray, and to saue a
soule from death. As S. Iames speaketh. Iames 5. 20.
And so to conuert a multitude of
sinners, is a blessed thing, and ought to be done
men with diligence to vse charitable admoni-
tion. If they should do it in choller,
I could like of it: but men hate sinne,
they doe it because they are precise and
[illegible]

zelot. Lay a man see you commit some
foule crime, and reproue you, you say
sinne is by and by, you may not iudge a
matter as the matter is plaine and doth iudge
it selfe. Now when a man doth admonish
you according as God commandeth, you
are holden with the same mouth, when
they do, you ought not to iudge, but to iudge
him all wrong that he doth it of enuy
and quarrelling, to do all the thing, hating to
exercise good of it selfe: when as you
ought for no feeling the heart of a man, and

so find fault: doth it not well. You are those of whom the prophet speaketh, Woe be vnto them which call good euill, and euill good. If he be not infected with vices himself, & doth not perceiue the number, ought not for to amende, ye may say by by he doth it of an euil mind: for can he be charitable vnto other men, to seeke their conuersion, & not to be charitable vnto himself to seeke his own saluation? Or can hee loue vertue himself in an other, and not hate it in himself?

Well, the best of vs all may be amended, we haue all infirmities: what would ye haue more then this, at the last for to call for mercy? If a man be sory and aske god forgiuenes is not that as well as they which are the most perfect? the mercy of God must be vs all: what would ye haue? I can not tell, but pray God I may haue time to repent in the end. Lo here is good stuffe, here is sound doctrine: I may well call this lesson euen the gate of all, for it openeth vnto the willing, that a thousande may goe in out a

This is true, that the best of vs all may be

I a amended

amended, and that wee haue all infirmities?
thus yee doe wickedly apply it, for whereas yee
should reason thus, the best may be amended,
the most holy are spotted, and therefore as
Saint Paule doth teache, they must indeuour
for to proceede forwarde, for the woorde of
God willeth men to striue and contende
against all wickednesse, and neuer to cease, but
to come as nigh perfection as is possible. But
you reason quite contrarie, that because the
best are sinners, therefore men are to make
small account to amende, for thus you thinke
thus, the most godlye haue cause to sorrowe
and mourne, and procede in repentance,
therefore how much more reason haue wee
to be grosse sinners, and for vain glorie Christ
such sheeve, spitting: That whosoeuer con-
tinueth sinne, in the fruitfull of sinne
How long as a man is the seruant of
sinne, so long he hath not the seruice of God,
for no man can serue two Masters, as ye
know. Saint Paule saith, they that commit
such sinne, as the Diuelly workes learned
you shall haue no way to inherite the
kingdome of God. The law of God
God commaundeth men to repent speedily,
& [illegible] from daye to daye. Hee
bath sworne & I threat-

[illegible] exceedingly [illegible] in the first
Chapter of the Prouerbes, crying when hee
hath called and required them to come
vnto him from their ill ways, and they haue
refused, that at the last they shall call and
not bee heard, hee will laugh when they
desire him, and mock them, when they
shall seeke him, but not finde him: Now
you see, that when God hath called and
we refuse, that we shall not call: and he
[illegible] when [illegible]
[illegible] the Scripture saieth, that [illegible]
[illegible] Death teacheth the Impenitent for
[illegible] (If the Scripture speaketh any thing
[illegible] Death doeth teach the Impenitent for
[illegible] hee will) It is most true,
[illegible] what time soeuer a sinner doth re-
pent him of his sinnes and is forgiuen, but it is im-
[illegible] for an vnpenitent man to will, can
hee take a new heart vnto him, though hee
[illegible] but hee shall neuer be [illegible] and a right
spirite when hee will? It is God [illegible]
[illegible] a man vnto, and [illegible] him a new
[illegible] in Christ, when it pleaseth him: [illegible]
[illegible] and [illegible] for any thing
but to bee saued, but that is not [illegible]

Ath.

Repentaunce is a returning home
vnto God from all euill vices and corrupte
desires which are in the flesh and in the hart,
To be renewed by repentance, cannot be but
where a man is renewed in knowledge, for
that is the part of the Image of GOD, which
must be restored in vs: Reade in the 4. Chap-
ter to the Ephe. from the 17. verse forwarde,
If a man continue in darkenesse, he doth not
repent: Who committeth his foule sinne
still, although it be but in the desire of his
hart, hath not repented. He which doth not
feele sorow and griefe, and hath not a broken
and contrite heart, and a sorowful spirit, hath
not repented, he which doth not exercise euill
and doe good, hath not repented. All these are
taught by the woorde, for that is it by which
we must rule our wayes: Be therefore ye may
boldly say, that he which learneth not out of
gods woord to repent, cannot repent for although
it were possible he could repent for all o-
ther sinnes, yet this one sinne, to set light by
the instruction of the Gospell, will make his
[illegible] than they of Sodome, as our Sauiour
[illegible] teacheth.

Ath. Will you condemne those which call for mercy at their ende which neuer repented before.

Zelot. We may not pronounce any one man, because GOD only knoweth what is in man. But yet we may boldely goe so farre as the word of GOD doth warrant vs: and by it we may see what GOD requireth and what God doth condemne. We may see that the common and generall repentance which all professe at their ende, is not so much as a shadowe of true repentance: repentance cannot be in a man, especially in a sodayne, but he must needes finde a wonderfull change in him selfe, he must needes be able to say that I haue repented, I know and feele that I am a new man, and therefore because I know my selfe certainely that there is repentance in me, I know my selfe certainely that I shall bee saued: for GOD promiseth saluation vnto euery one which doth repent. In the common repentance men finde no such things. But are still (as they may be well enough) in doubte of saluation.

Ath. Shall not all such as call vpon God be heard surely I dare not say they shall.

Zelot.

Zabet. I am sure because the Lord doth speake it. Thou whosoeuer doth call vpon him shall bee saued. But yet we must vnderstand, that then they must pray in faith, as for the prayers of a wicked man which doth not repent, and therefore hath not the true faith they are no prayers before GOD, although he crye loude, or call neuer so often and sore for vs: such the Lorde speaketh in the first Chapter of the Prophet Esaiah. When ye stretch forth your handes, I will turne away mine eies from you. Also if ye multiplye your prayer I will not heare. Likewise the holy Ghoste saieth by Solomon in the Proverbes that the Sacrifice of the wicked is an abhomination. And in the same booke it is sayde. He that turneth away his eares from hearing the lawe, euen his prayer shall bee abhominable. And therefore in the latter ende of the fourth Chapter of Ecclesiastes, he aduiseth men when they come into the house of GOD, to take heede to their feete, and to be readier to heare, then to offer the sacrifice of fooles. For (saith he) they knowe not that they do euill. Nowe yee shall finde many men crye in their miseries and make great confession of their vngodly lyfe: but yet without true repentance, as it is manifest

sent, for so soone as they prosper againe, ye shall see them returne to their olde byas: if they had truely repented, they should neuer continue with them, nor ye that liue in malice, so soone as they bee dangerously sicke, will bee ready to aske forgiuenes, and to forgiue all the worlde. They know it booteth not to beare malice any longer, but so long as they be able to crawle out of their bedde, and to stand vpon their legs, ye shall see their old withered malice (as it seemed) spring a fresh againe, which is a strong proofe, that they neuer truely repented, howsoeuer they thought they did. And euen so is it with all other sinnes; they seeme vnto men for to repent, they aske GOD forgiuenesse, but yet the heart abydeth still the same that it was before GOD: there is no change in them before God: they haue not put off the sinnefull body of the flesh: there is no change in them before God: howsoeuer they seeme to bee changed before men. O this counterfeit repentance maketh men bold all their life to despise the holy words of God, which should instruct and guide them: it is cause them at their ende not to feare the wrath of God, nor the vengeance to come: because they

they thinke GOD is satisfied with this repentance, and also because they knowe no their sinnes, they suppose that they are buried the shoes, when as they are drowned in the goulfe of vnkindnesse ouer head and eares.

And God helpe vs if it be thus: howe shall poore men doe then?

Men must apply them selues all their life to seeke for the knowledge of God, to increase in faith & repentance, that when they come to their ende, they may haue a testimony of conscience, that they haue feared God.

Likewise when yee come to a sicke man and aske howe hee doeth, if he can but saye, as it pleaseth GOD, yee answere, that is enough: neighbour, holde ye there: If hee saye I haue offended GOD, and I praye GOD forgiue me: ye answere, there needeth no more as you thinke. Yee shoulde teache them the Lawe, that they may see how they haue offended GOD, ye should shewe them the fearefull curse, and horrible vengeance due vnto sinne, that so they may be stricken with remorse and sorrowe: ye should shewe them also the glad tydinges of the Gospell, and what comfort

vnto

vnto the penitent sinner. Yee should teache them what holinesse GOD requireth at their hand, howe they maye comme vnto it, what promise they haue made vnto GOD, of it in baptisme. Ye should instruct them in all the principall pointes of the faith. That so they may haue the true winge faith whiche shall iustifie and saue them.

Ath. What difference can you shewe betweene those whiche are taught, as you would haue them, & such as haue knowledge, they can no more but repente, call for mercie, beleeue? And this do they as well as the other.

Zeb. You thinke there is no difference, but there is this difference, that the one parte doeth beleeue and repent indeede, and the other but in worde, as saieth Christe Math. 15. alleadging the saiyinge of God by his Prophet, This people honoure me with their mouthe and honour me with their lippes, but their hearte is farre from me.

Ath. That is meante when a man doth speake with his mouthe, and meaneth not with his harte, but there haue ben godlie sayinges in their mindes.

It is meante when a man approached

cheth with his mouth, and hath nil a wicked harr, and an euill conscience, for those doe dishonour him so farre from GOD, that no blinde intent can make him neere vnto him. God looketh for great thinges in the heartes of those which call vppon him.

Ath. I think God accepteth the prayer of the honest poore man as well as of any other, & will heare him as soone, as he will heare the prayer of those whiche knowe most, and are the best learned.

Zelot. God is no accepter of persons, hee heareth the poore as well as the riche, the vnlearned as well as the learned, so that their prayers be made aright. But if ye speake of those honest men which are so called, & yet are voyde of all knowledge of Gods woorde, and of religion, it is an easye matter for to proone that their prayers are not good.

Ath. Can yee haue any better prayer then the Lordes prayer, when they praye that, can ye require more?

Zelot. There can be no better prayer then the Lordes prayer, and hee which prayeth that right must needes bee saued. But let mee aske you this question, what if a man pray the Lordes prayer with his mouth

and

and regardeth is not in his hart, shal his prayer be good?

Ath. His prayer cannot be good, he doth but mocke God.

Zelot. Then tell me this, a man prayeth thus, hallowed be thy name, in word he seemeth to desire that the name of God may be sanctified and honoured: he goeth his waye, and blasphemeth the name of GOD, or heareth it blasphemed and neuer careth, rayleth vpon his word, dishonoureth him, doe yee not thinke that hee made a fayre prayer? In the like manner he saith, thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen, he goeth away, and is so farre from desiring to doe the will of GOD, that he neuer careth for to knowe it. Whereby it is euident that he little meant with his hart that which he said with his tongue.

Moreouer, he would seeme to woorke according vnto God that hee and others might doe the will of God in earth, as the Angels doe in heauen: and yet tell him when hee breaketh the will of God, and his answere is, I am not so precise, I am not so curious, I will not be so holy, you are ful of the spirite: and then he will euen reproch the

which

which her seemed for to pray for. And these are the prayers of those poore honest menne, which you thinke God heareth as well as the prayers of any other. I might goe through all the petitions and finde the like. It is exceeding great pitie that men want instructions for a great multitude doe rush to their prattling prayers, when as they do not either vnderstand what they say, or els meane the contrary.

Athan. If a man labour all the weeke truely and honestly, and vpon the Sabboth day come to the church and make his prairs, that we say god regarded not his praier, because he doth not vnderstand what he praieth: his intent is good, he doeth his good will: he hath a wife and children to prouide for, he must follow the world, and let preaching goe, or els he shall beggar: and so long as he doth hurt no man, but dealeth vprightly: I thinke God doth require no more at his handes. Such as these naught els for to doe let them seeke for knowledge.

Zelot. Yee are like vnto a hedge which is full of bryers and pricking thornes, a man cannot lay holde on yee vnlesse yee bringe his

his hedging gloues, and his bill. Yet vnder many things to shroude your selfe vnder: and to keepe the truth from touching of ye, as the Lord in his worde hath set foorth the whole armour for a Christian souldier: so likewise Satan doth by suggestion reache men to arme themselues against the Lorde. But ye must be stript of your armour, at the least ye must be shewed that it is no armour of proofe. Ye say that if a man labour truly & honestly all the weeke, that is labour so which doth not alone for necessitie, but best cause God requireth that men should painefully trauell: and which hath the warrant of God as a meane for to guide their steppes for what soeuer a man doth, if it be not in obedience of God in his worde, it is sinne. To pray vpon dressabboth for fashion sake is very detestable, because we are not mindfull all daye, and in continuall watchyng vnto helpe continually from the Lorde: vpon whome our saluation doeth daily depende we are commaunded to pray continually or to haue our hearte watching thereunto. To pray without vnderstanding, is not praying, but mumming. You speake as though it were a thing which God doth allowe, that men should seeke more after the world then after

after God and to make the worlde their God. And because they haue wife and children to prouide for, therfore they cánot seek to know God, As though we were not commanded to seeke first the kingdom of God, that is to seek that chiefly, and more then the world, & then God hath promised that al these thinges shall be cast vpon vs. Howe shall any man be excused when God maketh this promise vnto all: as he doth performe it vnto as many as doe trust him. I haue been young (saith the Prophet) and now am old, yet did I neuer see the righteous forsaken, & his seed begging their bread. When ye say he must folow the world, and let preaching goe, ye were euen as good say, he must follow the Diuell, and let GOD go. And if any ignoráte má could come so far as to deale vprightly, & to hurte no man neyther in worde nor deede (whiche notwithstanding they come no thing neere) yet this worlde not serue the turne: for there is a GOD who will be knowne and worshipped in that religion, which he teacheth. Haue ye so fleshly eyes that yee can looke no higher? Doe yee thinke God requireth no more but an honest and ciuill conuersation towardes

men. God requireth euen of the poore labou-
ring man, that he should (if he wil be blessed)
meditate in his lawe, or his doctrine day and
night. Psal 1. Likewise when he saith that the
man is blessed which feareth the Lord, to the
end we might know what that man is, he ad-
deth immediately, he hath great delight in his
commandements. But the most part of your
honest men now a dayes, delight so muche in
the word of God, and meditate so much in it,
that they care not a button though they ne-
uer heare it: they loue it and see as much by
it as they do by an old shoe. And are not so
forward as you do allowe, to seeke for the
knowledge of God, when they haue naught
els for to doe: for you thinke ye graunt a li-
berall allowance to God.

Ath. Would ye make me beleeue that
God doth require that men should leaue
their businesse: when they be put to haue
charge of children, and giue themselues to
hearing & hearing of preachings: & but if
ye haue him let his children perish for
zelot. God doth not require that men
should leaue their businesse, but as they haue
time, to seeke for the things of the bodye,

foulfoote there times, for to seeke for heauenly thinges: God hath not made men for this life, but for the world to come. Hee hath set the promises of eternall life before the that seek them painfully in his word, men must not be as beaste all for the belly.

Ath. What if there be no preaching where a man dwelleth?

Zelot. What if there be within three or foure miles?

Ath. Shall hee runne thyee or foure mile after that?

Zelot. Ye goe about three or foure mile to the market to prouide meate for the caryon body, but ye would not allow a man vpon that daye which is the market daye for the foode of the soule to goe halfe so farr. Yee are children of the worlde, earth, wormes, those which labour for the meate which perisheth, but wil not labour for the meate which indureth for euer. Iohn 6. Yee loue the worlde and the thinges that are in the world, and therfore as S. Iohn saith in his first Epistle, The loue of the Father is not in ye, ye cannot serue GOD and Mammon.

Ath. Let them runne that wil, when

If ye them agree better together, then I will heare them: when they cannot agree among themselues, they are vnwise which heareth vnto them.

Zelot. Yee might be a counsellour for your graue wisdome, whoe is able to answeare you in this matter: when ye dash forth so strong an argumẽt grounded vpon so great reason, and infallible principles? but I praye ye what would yee haue done if yee had liued in the time of Ieremie the Prophet, & also of other Prophets, when there were the Priestes and the rulers in the tẽple, with many which tooke vpon thẽ to be prophetes, & to speak in the name of the lord, set against a few of gods messẽgers? What would ye haue done when Christ preached, & the Pharisees and priests, & al the learned against him? Would yee not haue heard Paule, because he disagreed with the false Apostls? The scriptures haue foretold that there shall be heresies, sectes, and false teachers in the Church euen to the worldes ende. Your great skill hath taught you to make so good a choyce of the time when ye wil heare, and to take so long a day, for I warrant yee it will not bee two weekes before

the day of doome. Yee should speake plainely and say: Ye neuer meane for to heare, & that ye would with al other for to be of the same minde: and then ye should bee litle troubled with Gods word. Cry out against the Preachers, but let your meaning bee against the preaching it self. The Diuel is a very skilful workman, he doth not teach his schollers to say, fie vpon Gods word: but to finde excuses how to shift themselues from hearing the same.

Ah, if they would teach men how to beleeue better, then I could bee content for to say as you saye: But they would driue men into dispayre, & bring them out of beliefe with the feare of damnation.

Zelot. This wedge hath beene driuen often enough already: neuertheleſſe because ye are so knottie, and crabbed a peece to cleeue, I will giue it one blow more: the matter is hainously taken that men preache sharpely in reprehending the vices whiche nowe raygne. They are now said to preache nothing but the Lawe, which in deede cannot conuert a man from vngodlynesse, but of it selfe is the strength of sinne: they are

sayde to be murtherers, because they preach but the dead letter which doth kill. No doubt whosoeuer doth preach no more but the lawe, and so damnation, is no minister of Christe. But here lyeth all the matter, men would bee flattered and soothed in their sinnes, they are loth for to heare of any iudgement of God against wickednesse, and as they bee like vnto the people of the Iewes when the Prophetes were sent vnto them, corrupt and corrupting themselues, and grudging against the messengers of GOD, when they threatned vengeaunce, and willing them not to preach so, but to preach pleasant things: euen so are there now which lay pyllowes vnder their elbowes and preache peace, peace, when all is corrupt in their lyues, and therefore there can be no peace. He which shall reade the Prophetes, shall finde the state of the Church then, and ours now, in all these thinges very lyke: Firste, all foule vices ouerflowing, as amonge vs: Secondly, the people presuming vppon their blinde faythe and counterfeite repentaunce, and hypocriticall prayers, as they doe nowe: Thirdly, the Prophets sent of GOD exceeding sharpe to

preaching them, and denouncing the iudgements of God against them: Fourthly the people repining thereat, and thinking them selues hardly dealt withall: desiring to be more tenderly handeled as to heare pleasaunt thinges, and to haue them prophesie of wine & strong drinke: Lastly, certaine Preachers fit for the time healing vp, and smoothing vp all with sweete wordes, and telling them all is wel, all is well. He which doth but lightly read ouer the Prophetes, and cannot finde al these thinges, is but a simple man. In like manner, he which dothe dwell amongst vs at this daye, and perceiueth no such matter, is but a stranger.

Ath. Nay you that are precise Puritans do finde fault where there is none: you condemne men for euery trifle. Whereas ye are but men, and haue your infirmities as well as other: yet yee would make your selues as holy as Angels.

Color. I abhorre the errors of the Catherites or Puritans, I confesse that I am loden with corruptions: If that bee your meaning, to charge mee with that opinion, whiche is wicked and diuelishe. But if ye

take the name Puritane for one which hath more care to obey GOD, then the common sorte, and therefore laboureth to keepe him selfe pure and vnspotted of the worlde (as Saint Iames speaketh) then looke to it, that ye be not founde among those which resiste not men but God. If yee meane by precise men, those which are so scrupulous, as to make sin where there is none, as your words do plainly shew, then doe I vtterly renounce that name for to be called precise, and I disowe such fonde persons, whosoeuer they be. But I knowe you meane those which walke precisely as Saint Paule willeth, and doe take heede to their wayes: non condemning men, but admonishing them, not in trifles, but in waightie matters, although you count them trifles. The commaundementes of GOD (at the least some of them) are but trifles with you. You see not nor consider how great the Lorde GOD is, and therefore yee dare affyrme diuers sinnes done against him to be but trifling and small, yee measure not sinne with a true measure, when ye doe measure it after the rule of a man. Yee doe not know wherefore there is eternall death threatned agaynste euerye small sinne: ye may

well

will at that, because ye are blinde and cannot iudge how great he is, whose wil is disobeied. Let me ferst beffure ye: Doe yee not suppose that if one of your degree should say soe thing against yee that were a reproche, as for example, call yee knaue, were it not an offence?

Ath. I thinke I may wel say he doth offende, for he ought not to deale so with his neighbour.

Zelot. Then he is worthy some rebuk for his euill tongue?

Ath. Yea, and to confesse his faulte also.

Zelot. What if he should giue such language to a Iustice of peace: or to some inferiour Magistrate: Yee wil confesse the faulte is greater: because it is against a higher person?

Zelot. No doubt the faulte should be greater, and he were worthy to sit by the heeles for it.

Zelot. What if he should doe it to a noble man, as one of the chiefe Counsellours of the Prince, were it not then much greater?

Ath. I must néedes confesse so: and such a villaine were worthy for to lose his eares.

Zelot.

Zelot. What if hee should doe it vnto a Prince?

Ath. He were worthy then for to lose his life.

zelot. Doe yee not knowe that God is in an infinite degree aboue Princes, they are but dust before him?

Ath. I know that well enough.

zelot. Wherfore haue ye not the reason then for to consider, that those sinnes which seeme to bee very small, are exceeding great, because they be done against his infinite Maiestie. The ignoraunce of this poynt causeth many men for to make but a light account of diuers sinnes, and euen to laugh at them: likewise to mocke at those whiche make conscience of them, counting them ouer precise & nice. Such men doe not knowe the Lorde aright in his most high maiestie: They know not the weightinesse of his lawe, euen in the least point in it. And it is ouer childish which they obiecte against the godlye, haue not you infirmities? are you not men? What woulde they gather hereby, that because men haue infirmities, therefore they may not reproue such as wilfully and carelesly offende. The rest of your speech is a meere slander, a

deuice

deuice which the Diuill hath found out for to shame true godlineſſe. For let a man haue but the tenth part of the zeale, which the word of God requireth, or neuer ſo little a ſparke of indeuour for to walk vprightly, & he ſhal haue it caſtin his teeth, that hee thinketh himſelfe half a God, and taketh himſelfe to be as holy as an Angell.

Ach. It number doe ſo indeede, or elſe they ſhould not be ſo ready ſur to check euery man: and eſteeme ſo well of their ſelues.

zelat. Doeth that bone ſticke in your throte ſtill, take heede that it doe not choke yee. Yee take it for a ſore checke, when anye doeth refuſe to take parte with you in your wickednesſe: following the counſel of Saint Paule, when hee ſaieth, haue no felowſhippe with the vnfruiteſull woorkes of darkeneſſe, but rather reproue them. Lyght is come into the worlde and men loue darkeneſſe more then light, beecauſe their workes bee euill. Howe well they eſteeme of themſelues you cannot tell: this is moſte certaine, that although a godlye manne hath nothing of his owne for to boaſte of, beecauſe it is the grace of the Lorde which hath putte

the

the difference, yet he may well thinke better of himselfe, then of the wicked. And such as haue no regard to serue God but in a few words.

Ath. Do ye thinke that there be none which are ouer precise? which would seeme for to be so holy, and yet are not.

Zelot. The Deuill is a cunning worker man, when he seeketh for to bring the trueth into discredit, he can play on both hands, he'l can deceiue on euery side. And therefore hee hath some vaine and curious braines which are ouer precise in things which are no sinne, passing by foule and great sins in themselues, which is a great vanitie, and vnder colour of godly zeale, which they would seeme for to haue, they couer their bitternes eue of wormwood, & gall: which vncharitably somtymes they caste forth vpon such as are more Godly then them selues. But this ought not for to be anye discredite vnto suche as are zealous and earnest against those thinges which are vices in deede, although they seeme for to be neuer so small: as for example, when one doeth sweare as you did, by this faith, or by bread, or fire: tell him of it: what is his answer? ye are ouer precise: I meane no harme,

neither

neither to God nor men? I speake earnestly, I doe not lie: if it be a sinne, it is but a small sin. But see how grosse an exercise this is, he breaketh the cómaundemét of God, & yet he meaneth no hurt: Christ our great teacher doth straighly vrge it, and yet he saieth it is but a small sinne, a thing not to be regarded. How much dishonour is this to our heauenly master, to say that he taught things so small and trifling, that they are not to be regarded?

Ath. Well, it is happy that we shalbe saued by faith in Christ, although we bee sinnefull: he hath shed his blood for vs: I looke for to be saued by him, what would ye haue more?

Zelat. It is happy in deede for those which haue faith, for they are clensed from their sinnes. But such as you seeke no more but to make the death of Christe as an easie score to set all vppon: for ye are like to the man which thinking that hee should haue all of his hostis for scoring vp, tooke very liberally: yee thinke the reckoning is now so easie, that ye may set cocke a howpe, all is payde for. But if I should trye your faith by the woorde, yee shoulde see that yee haue little enough: and therefore your score will faile in

the

the end, and grow to a greater payment then yee suppose.

Ath. Whatsoeuer you say, ye shall neuer driue mée from beleeuing in Christe: nor all the sort of yée.

Zelot. I would not for tenne thousande worldes be the man which should driue any one from the faith in Christe, I doe seeke to bring you vnto the faith in Christ.

Ath. Ye may keepe such seeking to your self, and let mé alone: I beleeue as well as you, take care for your selfe, you shal not answere for mée.

Zelot. Now yee are sure I trow, for this night, ye haue stopped my mouth, and giuen mé a bone to gnaw vpon. But I pray yee, shall not I answer for ye in no respect? what if I see ye are blind & ready for to fall into the pit of eternall destruction, and wil not put forth my hãd for to succour ye, is it not to be laid vnto my charge, that I wanted loue? Therfore I can easily pull your bridle out of my mouth: and be so bold as for to meddle with ye, we will a little trie, because ye bragge so stoutly, how well yee beleeue. Ye beleeue Christ was crucified, and suffered vpon the Crosse; but are yee able for to prooue that yee beleeue in

Christ

Christ crucified?

A. I say I doe, are you able for to disproue me.

Rel. Sinne is not slaine in ye, therfore ye doe not.

Ath. How proue ye that sinne is not slaine in me?

Rel. Because it doth raigne in yee, therefore it is aliue.

Ath. I know not what ye meane by that.

Rel. Yee are ledde by sinne, ye delight in it, ye haue not mortified the lusts and concupiscences of the same. And therefore ye haue not learned Christ, as S. Paule speaketh, Ephesians 4. Ye haue not put off the old man, and put on the new man. The death and passion of Christ hath not slaine sinne in yee, for to beleeue in Christ crucified, is for to beecrucified with him, as the Apostles doe teach in sundry places. The reason is this, Christ was not crucified for to slay sinne in himselfe (for he had none) but in his members, whiche are ioyned and knit vnto him by faith, in them the force & power of his death doth shewe it selfe: now he which hath not this worke of the death of Christ in him, that he feeleth

him

himself crucified concerning the body of sin, his faith in the passion of Christ is but a dead faith, and cannot saue him. This is the cause why S. Paul saith, Rom. 8. That those which are in Christ, walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. S. Iohn saith, 1. Epistle, chap. 3. Yee know that hee was made manifest to take away our sins, and in him was no sin. Whosoeuer abideth in him sinneth not, hee that sinneth hath not seene him, nor known him.

Ath. Then by that reason, yee would proue that all that beleeue in Christe are perfect without sinne. I thinke all are sinners.

Zelot. Whosoeuer is borne of God sinneth not. 1. Iohn. 3. 9.

Ath. Is there any man which can saye that he is without sinne?

Zelot. Not one which liueth in this flesh.

Ath. Then ye are contrary vnto your self: for euen now ye said: That whosoeuer abideth in Christ sinneth not, and he which is borne of God sinneth not: and now ye confes that al are sinners so long as they liue.

Zelot. I am not contrary vnto my self but

but your blindnesse causeth you so to thinke. Reade Saint Paule in the Epistle to the Romaines Chapter 7. and there ye shall finde how Saint Paule coupleth both these things together in him selfe, which you imagine to be so contrary, that by no meanes they may bee founde in one man together at one time. He confesseth that there was a lawe in his members, rebelling against the lawe of his minde, and leading him captiue to the lawe of sinne. And yet a little before in the same chapter he saith, That he did not commit the euill, but sinne which dwelt in him. The reason which hee maketh is, that hee did consente vnto the lawe, and wouldе haue done the good, but he did the euill which hee hated. To make the matter plaine, thus it is. Saint Paule was regenerate, but yet not in full perfection, for the remnaunt of sinne did abide in him: that whiche the parte regenerate did, or coueted to doe, or consented vnto, that he saith he did: and that which the corruption which did still remaine in him, forced him for to doe, that he saith hee did not, but sinne which dwelled in him. Hee doeth esteeme himselfe in the parte regenerate, he counteth the remnaunt of the olde man, to be but as excrementes, or as a dead carcase, which did abide

in him, and ouey him. His delight and desire was vppon the good, hee hated the euill, and therefore when hee did sinne, because it was against his consent, and against his will, it was no obedience which he gaue vnto it: he did not therefore serue sinne, neyther did sinne raigne ouer him, but exercise a certeine tirannie ouer him, which he could not speake of.

Ath. I knowe not what ye meane with ye haue sayd what ye can, all men be sinners.

Zelot. Yee may very easily perswade me to beleeue that yee knowe not what I meane: If your fiue wittes were fifteene, they woulde helpe nothing in this case. Because ye know not what this meaneth, if yee know not what faith in Christe crucified meaneth, ye knowe not what repentance meaneth, if yee canne no difference of sinners: all are sinners saye you, and the death of Christe is that which saueth, not considering that the death of Christ first killeth those whome it maketh aliue. For this cause men stegreatly ouershot oftentimes, when they come vnto a sicke man, they thinke if he say, I beleeue Christ died for my sinnes, and shedde his bloud for me, that then all is as well as may bee. If it were

faythe, do bathe in the bloud of Christe, they must thinke them in good case, for all their holynesse in him, shalbe named. But they stay vpon a bare fantasie, which is a dead and weak faith, not making them to feele the power of the death of Christe. Ignorance is so deepely fixed in our mindes, that few a man bee there so wicked, neuer so far from true knowledge of God, if he can make a shift to say the confession, they neuer looke further. And because that see almost all, (how euer they liue) haue this, to vnderstand themselues to bee christen, and neuer so much thinke of the new birth of which Christ speaketh, when he saith vnto Nicodemus vnlesse a man be borne againe, he cannot see the kingdome of God. This new birth is without at the doores, and therefore no doubt God doth shut them out of his kingdō which make no account of it.

Make your selfe neuer so skilful, yet ye cannot tell which man God saueth and which he condemneth.

It is not the wil of GOD, that we should take it vpon vs for to pronounce vpon any man, and to say he is damned: because we must leaue the secrete counsell of GOD vnto himselfe, who is not bound vnto vs, to giue any account of his doinges. But I pray ye let

you a little to consider how to this behalfe both of
your selues and others you ought to fight against true godly repen-
tance: you will say, no man dare call himself a
sinner, and who is there indeed, that dare
not for to cast off royall obedience and
repentance? and therefore the bible which
we giue vnto the word of God is therefore pointed
and set to this purpose, that every man may search the
same and know whether he be a sinner or no, and
whether he be a child of God or not. And the daughter may open her
heart to her mother, and the wife to her husband, and
so likewise the husband to his wife, and the woman to her
couple: that so they may all together with ioynt consent
labour what they can for to get out of sinne, and
take good heed that they neuer be ouercome by
any temptations, but that they may ouercome
and get the victory ouer them, and that they
may not only hold out in their godly course
vnto the end, but also that they may be found
even in the middest of destruction, to abound
more and more in doing
those things which are their bounden duty
because they trust in this belief which you
brag of. For as on the one side true faith
and true repentance vncouered and counterfeit vnto
God, do saue all the sores and sicknesses of the
soule: even so the common dead faith and
counterfeit repentance may be called the vnder
plaister

plaister, by which he doth a little in the roppe, for a time, salue the deepe and deadly wounds, but they canne within, & bring vtter destruction. In the next place that the word of God is not laid open in his place, that the people might come to the vnderstanding of Christ and his power, in translating them out of the power of darkenes, into his kingdom of light: which is proper to the diligent preaching, because such is made of a dull metall, and hard to conceiue spirituall and heauenly things.

Ath. Well, I must leaue ye now, for I haue spoke very hardly with me: it were good that our Puritanes should consider your selues, and become better subiectes to the Prince.

Zelot. I am like to haue a very good farewell at your hands, for all my trauell in teaching yee. But I loo ke for none other reward from yee: the blacke Moore cannot change his hew, nor the Cat of the mountaine her spots. I must suffer your reproaches, for if they haue called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more those which be of his household.

Those which consider not themselues, are worse then mad men. I tolde ye before, that I doe not allow that vice. For your slaun-

derous

derous accusation, that I come and desire it, I may boldly take the Lorde to witnesse vnto my conscience, that I doe honour and obeye the Prince, and that I detest and hate, and vtterly abhorre disobedience vnto the higher powers. But this hath ever been the readye waye which the Diuell hath vsed for to bring those which feare God into hatred by his instruments, to charge them for subiect enimies vnto Princes. Christe was accused of treason, and condemned as an enemie to Cæsar, &c. Saincte Paule diuers times was brought to the barre which did resemble the Seate of Iudgement, shal read the auncient stories of the Church, shal finde that this continued for many ages.

Ath. Are not there many which count themselues very holy, and yet breake the greatest lawes?

Zelot. What if it should fall out, as it doth fall out some times, that godlye Princes commaund some thing which is contrary vnto Gods word, should we obey God or men? It is a very grosse thing to thinke that a man for obeying God doeth disobeye his Prince. I would know of this also, whether the breach of euery particular lawe, doth make a man

by

by and by an euill subiecte to his Prince? If it should, I thinke true subiectes might soone be numbred. Likewise, I would knowe this, whether a man which is disobedient vnto GOD and despiseth his lawes, can for conscience sake bee obedient vnto his Prince? Hauing beene found vnfaythful to God, shall he bee iudged faythfull to men? And where as such as you crye out against those whiche professe the Gospell, that they breake the Queenes lawes, & are not the queenes frieds? I answere yee thus, I wil aduenture al that I haue, that let proofe bee made, and those whiche haue this moste in their mouthes the Queenes lawes, the queenes lawes, as though they were altogether made of obedience, shalbe found to breake two for their one, whome they accuse. If yee did cry out in this matter moued with a good conscience, then would ye bee carefull for to keepe the lawes your selues, and if ye haue care of princes lawes, the would ye haue care of Gods lawes.

Ath. Wherein can ye accuse mee?

Lator. I meane not to accuse you, but to speake that which I know by a number, they breake her maiesties lawes in their apparell, in their meate, in their woordes, beeinge blasphemers and raylers, in quarrelling & fighting, in dicing and carding, and bowling, and

so many such like. And because ye speake often of this, what mate be Quenes friends & lucky bone but such as feare God for the wicked & vngodly do prouoke God vnto anger against the realme, & do procure the destruction of it. God heareth the prayers of such as feare and loue his lawe, when they cry vnto him for their Prince: therfore shereth he no mate w the enemies vnto Princes, then such as are wicked against God. Nowe this it a very preposterous thing, that you which are rebels against God, should beare men in hand that ye be the frends of the Prince, & that such as are godly, they must be counted enemies.

Arth. I can say no more but God blesse and saue her.

Rebel. Amen. I pray God for his mercy sake graunt, that we may be thankfull for those exceeding great blessinges which hee hath by her heaped vpon vs, both for body & soule: and the Lord giue vs louing & obedient harts towards her. And also I beseech he God to keepe her out of the hands of her enemies, to gouern her with his blessed spirit, that she may exalt & magnifie his glorious Gospell more and more, & repaire the ruines of his Church: & so glorifie him in this world, that in the world to cõe she may be glorified for euer. Amen.

FINIS.

A Dialogue betweene a Papist and a Protestant, applied to the capacitie of the *vnlearned*.

Made by G. Gifford, Preacher in the Towne of Maldon.

Seene and allowed according to the order appoynted.

Imprinted at London for Tobie Cooke. 1583.

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To the right Honorable and his very good
Lord Thomas Earle of Suſſex, Vicount Fitzwater, and Lord Egremont, & Burnel, Knight of the moſt honourable order of the Garter: Captaine of all the Queenes Ma. Gentlemen Pencioners, and Gentleman at armes: Chiefe Iuſtice, & Iuſtice in Oyer of al her M. Foreſts, Parkes, Chaſes, and warrens, by ſouth Trent: and L. Chamberlaine to her highneſſe, grace and peace in our Sauiour Chriſt.

MAny in theſe dayes, with great learning haue encountred the Papiſtes, & ſtrongly confuted their errors. It may be marueiled therfore, what ſhould make me ſo bold as to attempt any ſuch matter, after ſo great clarks being farre vnable to come nigh that which they haue attemed. I anſwere in mine owne defence, that my trauell is not to this ende, as though I would make pretence of equal learning with thoſe: but rather to put the ſlone & ſling into ſ handes of little Dauid, to conquer great Goliah withal, when as he is not able to weld the weightie armor of Saul. The battel is hot & fierce euery where, betwene Iſrael & the vncircumciſed Philiſtines. Great armour & weapons are prepared for the ſouldiers wherwith to arme & defend theſelues: yet for the moſt part, not ſuch as do fit yong